United Nations A/55/PV.102

General Assembly
Fifty-fifth session

Official Records

102nd plenary meeting
Tuesday, 12 June 2001, 10 a.m.
New York

President: Mr. Holkeri ..... (Finland)

The meeting was called to order at 10 a.m.

Agenda item 122 *(continued)*

Scale of assessments for the apportionment of the expenses of the United Nations (A/55/745/Add.10)

The President: Before proceeding, I should like to draw the attention of the General Assembly to document A/55/745/Add.10. In the letter contained in that document, the Secretary-General informs the President of the General Assembly that, since the issuance of his communications contained in document A/55/745 and addenda 1 to 9, Haiti and Vanuatu have made the necessary payments to reduce their arrears below the amount specified in Article 19 of the Charter.

May I take it that the General Assembly duly takes note of the information contained in that document?

It was so decided.

Agenda item 166 (*continued*)

Election of judges of the International Tribunal for the Prosecution of Persons Responsible for Serious Violations of International Humanitarian Law Committed in the Territory of the Former Yugoslavia since 1991

Letter from the President of the Security Council (A/55/917)

Memorandum by the Secretary-General (A/55/918 and Add.1)

Curricula vitae (A/55/919 and Add.1 and 2)

The President: The General Assembly will now proceed to the election of 27 ad litem judges of the International Tribunal for the Prosecution of Persons Responsible for Serious Violations of International Humanitarian Law Committed in the Territory of the Former Yugoslavia since 1991, for a four-year term of office commencing on the day of the completion of this election.

By its resolution 1329 (2000) of 30 November 2000, the Security Council decided to establish a pool of ad litem judges of the International Tribunal. To that end, it decided to amend articles 12, 13 and 14 of the Statute of the International Tribunal. In that resolution, the Security Council further requested the Secretary-General to make practical arrangements for the election, as soon as possible, of 27 ad litem judges, in accordance with article 13 ter, of the Statute of the International Tribunal as so amended.

In connection with the election today of the 27 ad litem judges,. I should like to bring the following matters to the attention of the General Assembly.

First, in accordance with article 13 ter, paragraph 1, of the Statute of the International Tribunal as amended by Security Council resolution 1329 (2000), the 27 ad litem judges of the International Tribunal

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shall be elected by the General Assembly from a list of candidates submitted by the Security Council.

At its 4316th meeting, on 27 April 2001, the Security Council, in accordance with article 13 ter, subparagraph 1 (c), of the Statute of the International Tribunal, established in resolution 1350 (2001) a list of 64 candidates, taking due account of adequate representation of the principal legal systems of the world and bearing in mind the importance of equitable geographical distribution. The list was formally conveyed to the President of the General Assembly by a letter dated 27 April 2001 from the President of the Security Council. The letter was issued as document A/55/917.

Secondly, in accordance with article 13 ter, subparagraph 1 (d), of the Statute of the International Tribunal, the Holy See and Switzerland, the two non-member States maintaining Permanent Observer Missions at United Nations Headquarters will participate in the election in the same manner as the States Members of the United Nations. On this occasion, I am happy to welcome here the representatives of the Holy See and Switzerland.

Finally, I should like to draw the attention of the Assembly to the documents relating to the election. The memorandum by the Secretary-General concerning the election of judges of the International Tribunal is contained in document A/55/918 and addendum 1.

The list of 64 candidates can be found in paragraph 6 of document A/55/918, and the 8 withdrawals can be found in addendum 1 to that document. Therefore at present there are 56 candidates.

The curricula vitae of the candidates are contained in document A/55/919 and addenda 1 and 2. In that connection, may I bring to Members' attention the provision of article 13 of the Statute of the International Tribunal as amended, which reads as follows:

> "The permanent and ad litem judges shall be persons of high moral character, impartiality and integrity who possess the qualifications required in their respective countries for appointment to the highest judicial offices. In the overall composition of the Chambers and sections of the Trial Chambers, due account shall be taken of the experience of the judges in criminal law, international law, including international humanitarian law and human rights law."

As representatives are aware, the election of judges will take place in accordance with the relevant provisions of article 13 ter of the Statute of the International Tribunal. In addition, given the similar nature of the election of judges of the International Court of Justice and the election of judges of the International Tribunal, it was decided at the time of the election of judges in 1993, 1997, 1998 and 2001 to follow similar election procedures in the General Assembly. In his memorandum, the Secretary-General suggests that these precedents be applied to the election of ad litem judges of the International Tribunal.

May I take it that the Assembly agrees to that suggestion?

It was so decided.

The President: In accordance with article 13 ter, subparagraph 1 (d), of the Statute of the International Tribunal, as amended, the candidates who receive an absolute majority of the votes of States Members of the United Nations and of the two non-member States shall be declared elected.

The consistent practice of the United Nations has been to interpret the words "absolute majority" as meaning a majority of all electors, whether or not they vote or are allowed to vote. The electors, for this purpose, are all 189 Member States and the two non-member States, namely, the Holy See and Switzerland. Accordingly, 96 votes constitute an absolute majority for the purpose of electing judges of the International Tribunal.

If in the first ballot the number of candidates obtaining an absolute majority is less than 27, a second ballot will be held and balloting will continue, in the same meeting, until 27 candidates have obtained an absolute majority.

Following the practice in the election of judges of the International Court of Justice, the Secretary-General suggests in his memorandum that any second and subsequent balloting shall be unrestricted — I repeat, that any second and subsequent balloting shall be unrestricted.

It is further suggested that, following the practice in the election of the judges of the International Court

of Justice, if more than 27 candidates obtain an absolute majority of votes in the first ballot, a second ballot will be held on all candidates and balloting will continue, at the same meeting, until 27 candidates, and no more, have obtained an absolute majority.

May I take it that the Assembly agrees to the procedure I have just outlined?

It was so decided.

Mr. Navarrete (Mexico) (*spoke in Spanish*): Today, as on all the previous occasions when the General Assembly has met to elect judges of ad hoc international tribunals, Mexico takes the floor to explain the reasons why, since the first such occasion, it has decided not to participate in these elections.

On all those occasions Mexico, a country committed to the promotion and protection of human rights and to full compliance with the norms of international humanitarian law, has stated that in establishing such tribunals the Security Council went beyond its powers, given that the Charter of the United Nations contains no explicit provision granting the Council the authority to create jurisdictional mechanisms of this nature.

Mexico has also expressed its conviction that once the Statute of the International Criminal Court is in force — a body whose establishment did follow the norms of international law — the establishment of new ad hoc tribunals will not be necessary. In addition, Mexico has stated that it will continue to pay in a timely manner its assessed contributions for the funding of those tribunals, strictly abiding by the decisions adopted in this regard by the General Assembly.

This continues to be Mexico's position. Nevertheless, Mexico has taken note of the important contribution the tribunals have made to combating impunity by bringing to justice individuals who have committed serious crimes of international significance, thus ensuring the rule of law. In this connection, the work done by the ad hoc criminal tribunals since their establishment has had undeniable legal effects, establishing international jurisprudence which has made possible the strengthening and development of international humanitarian law.

The ad hoc criminal tribunals have played a central role in putting international humanitarian law into practice — especially with regard to the norms enshrined in the 1949 Geneva Conventions, which constitute the most authoritative expression of international humanitarian law currently in force. By virtue of those Conventions, which Mexico ratified in 1952, the High Contracting Parties committed themselves to respecting, and ensuring respect for, the Conventions in all circumstances, in accordance with their common article 1.

It is for all these reasons that Mexico will henceforth participate fully in the election of judges for special tribunals, putting the importance of the work done by these legal bodies above its principled reservations with regard to how they were set up. This decision takes effect immediately and has not been previously communicated to the States putting forth candidates for this election.

The delegation of Mexico has taken various criteria into account in deciding whom to vote for in this election. Among those is the desirability of having the composition of the Tribunal reflect as broadly as possible the diversity of legal systems and traditions in existence throughout the various regions, as well as the principle of gender equality.

Mr. Musambachime (Zambia): I would like to say that I have been instructed to inform the Assembly that the following candidates would like to withdraw their candidacies: Mr. Chifumu Kingdom Banda, Mr. Isaac Chibulu Tantameni Chali and Mr. Mphanza Patrick Mvunga. There is thus only one Zambian candidate, namely, Ms. Irene Chirwa Mambilima.

Archbishop Martino (Holy See): The Holy See has attentively followed the proceedings of the International Criminal Tribunal for the Prosecution of Persons Responsible for Serious Violations of International Humanitarian Law Committed in the Territory of the Former Yugoslavia since 1991.

The Holy See regards the Tribunal as an instrument of the international community to express its condemnation of violations of international humanitarian law. Although the Holy See is a non-member State that maintains a permanent observer mission at the United Nations, it nevertheless appreciates that it is invited to participate in the election of ad litem judges to the Tribunal in the same manner as the States Members of the United Nations, in accordance with article 13 ter, paragraph 1 (d), of the Statute of the International Tribunal as amended by

the Security Council in resolution 1329 (2000) of 30 November 2000.

In this regard, I would like to inform the Assembly that the Holy See, in accordance with the practice in similar cases and for the sake of impartiality, has decided to abstain from casting its vote on the individual candidates for the office of ad litem judge of the International Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia.

The Holy See wishes to reiterate its confidence in the choices that will be made by the international community, and it extends its sincere best wishes to the ad litem judges who will soon be elected to serve the cause of justice and peace in the world.

Mr. Nteturuye (Burundi) (*spoke in French*): Representatives will have noticed that the delegation of Burundi has nominated three candidates. I would like to inform the Assembly that I have received instructions to announce that Burundi would like to retain only one candidate, namely, Mr. Léopold Ntahompagaze. The two other candidates, Mr. André Ntahomvukiye and Mr. Zacharie Rwamaza, are therefore withdrawn.

The President: The Assembly has heard the statements by the representatives of Zambia and Burundi announcing the withdrawal of a total of five candidates. We will proceed to the first round of balloting taking those statements into account. The names of the candidates just withdrawn will therefore be removed from the ballot papers.

Before we can proceed with the voting process, we need to produce new ballot papers. It is for that reason that I now intend to suspend the meeting for 15 minutes.

The meeting was suspended at 10.25 a.m. and resumed at 11.10 a.m.

The President: The General Assembly will now proceed to the first unrestricted ballot to elect 27 ad litem judges. Taking into account the statements made by the representatives of Zambia and Burundi, the ballot papers to be distributed will have 51 candidates.

I should like to remind Members that, pursuant to rule 88 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly, no representative shall interrupt the voting except on a point of order on the actual conduct of the voting.

We shall now begin the voting process.

I request representatives to use only those ballot papers that have been distributed. Only those candidates whose names appear on the ballot papers are eligible for election. Representatives will indicate the 27 candidates for whom they wish to vote by placing crosses at the left of their names on the ballot papers. Ballot papers on which more than 27 names are marked will be considered invalid. I repeat, ballot papers on which more than 27 names are marked will be considered invalid. Votes may be cast only for those whose names appear on the ballot papers.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Hovhannisyan (Armenia), Mrs. Martins (Brazil), Mr. Kristjansson (Iceland), Ms. Mesquita (Portugal), Mr. Al-Jomae (Saudi Arabia), Ms. Syptak (United States of America), Mr. Loedel (Uruguay) and Mr. Blanco (Venezuela) acted as tellers.

A vote was taken by secret ballot.

The meeting was suspended at 11.30 a.m. and resumed at 1.35 p.m.

The President: The result of the voting is as follows:

Number of ballot papers:	174
Number of invalid ballots:	2
Number of valid ballots:	172
Abstentions:	1
Number of members voting:	171
Required absolute majority:	96
Number of votes obtained:	
Mr. Amarjeet Singh (Singapore)	162
Ms. Chikako Taya (Japan)	145
Mr. Romeo T. Capulong (Philippines)	141
Mr. Arthur Chaskalson (South Africa)	141
Mr. Claude Hanoteau (France)	137
Mr. Mohamed Al Habib Fassi Fihri (Morocco)	133
Ms. Maureen Harding Clark (Ireland)	132
Mr. Guibril Camara (Senegal)	130
Mr. Lal Chand Vohrah (Malaysia)	130
Mr. Albin Eser (Germany)	129
Ms. Ivana Janü (Czech Republic)	129
Mr. Volodymyr Vassylenko (Ukraine)	127
Mr. Rafael Nieto-Navia (Colombia)	126
Mr. Hans Henrik Brydensholt (Denmark)	123
Mr. Mauro Politi (Italy)	122

Ms. Sharon A. Williams (Canada)	122
Ms. Carmen María Argibay (Argentina)	121
Mr. Per-Johan Lindholm (Finland)	121
Ms. Christine Van Den Wyngaert (Belgium)	119
Mr. Joaquin Martin Canivell (Spain)	113
Mr. Ralph Riachy (Lebanon)	111
Mr. Hassan Bubacarr Jallow (Gambia)	108
Mr. Krister Thelin (Sweden)	108
Ms. Fatoumata Diarra (Mali)	105
Mr. Albertus Henricus Joannes Swart (Netherlands)	105
Mr. György Szénási (Hungary)	99
Ms. Vonimbolana Rasoazanany (Madagascar)	93
Mr. Pierre G. Boutet (Canada)	84
Mr. Stefan Trechsel (Switzerland)	82
Ms. Irene Chirwa Mambilima (Zambia)	74
Ms. Jane Hamilton Mathews (Australia)	68
Mr. Aydin Sefa Akay (Turkey)	59
Ms. Lucy Asuagbor (Cameroon)	58
Mr. Oscar Ceville (Panama)	58
Mr. Léopold Ntahompagaze (Burundi)	57
Mr. Cenk Alp Durak (Turkey)	54
Mr. Jeremy Badgery-Parker (Australia)	51
Mr. Cesar Pereira Burgos (Panama)	51
Mr. Augustin P. Lobejón (Spain)	47
Ms. Flavia Lattanzi (Italy)	40
Mr. Roberto Bellelli (Italy)	38
Mr. Sourahata Babouccar Semega-Janneh (Gambia)	35
Mr. Dick F. Marty (Switzerland)	34
Mr. John Foster Gallop (Australia)	28
Mr. Robert Roth (Switzerland)	27
Mr. Moïse Ebongue (Cameroon)	25
Ms. Suzanne Mengue Zomo (Cameroon)	25
Ms. Ayla Songor (Turkey)	23
Mr. Aykut Kiliç (Turkey)	19
Mr. Tom Farquhar Shepherdson (Australia)	19
Mr. Mathew Epuli (Cameroon)	11

The President: Having obtained an absolute majority, the following 26 candidates, listed in alphabetical order, are elected ad litem judges of the International Tribunal: Ms. Carmen María Argibay (Argentina), Mr. Hans Henrik Brydensholt (Denmark), Mr. Guibril Camara (Senegal), Mr. Joaquin Martin Canivell (Spain), Mr. Romeo T. Capulong (Philippines), Mr. Arthur Chaskalson (South Africa), Ms. Maureen Harding Clark (Ireland), Ms. Fatoumata Diarra (Mali), Mr. Albin Eser (Germany), Mr. Mohamed Al Habib Fassi Fihri (Morocco), Mr. Claude Hanoteau (France), Mr. Hassan Bubacarr Jallow (Gambia), Ms. Ivana Janü (Czech Republic), Mr. Per-Johan Lindholm (Finland), Mr. Rafael Nieto-Navia (Colombia), Mr. Mauro Politi (Italy), Mr. Ralph Riachy (Lebanon), Mr. Amarjeet Singh (Singapore), Mr. Albertus Henricus Joannes Swart (Netherlands), Mr. György Szénási (Hungary), Ms. Chikako Taya (Japan), Mr. Krister Thelin (Sweden), Ms. Christine Van Den Wyngaert (Belgium), Mr. Volodymyr Vassylenko (Ukraine), Mr. Lal Chand Vohrah (Malaysia) and Ms. Sharon A. Williams (Canada).

There remains one seat to be filled. The Assembly should proceed to another ballot to fill the remaining vacancy. However, in view of the lateness of the hour, I should like to suggest that we suspend the meeting until 3 p.m. in order to continue with the balloting. In accordance with the decision taken earlier, that ballot will be unrestricted.

Mr. Francese (Italy): Very briefly, I would like, through you Mr. President, to express our thanks to the delegations that so strongly supported the Italian candidates in this election.

I wanted to suggest that in order to facilitate the rest of the proceedings, we could take the other two Italian candidates, who were not elected in the first ballot, off the list of candidates. The names of Mr. Bellelli and Ms. Lattanzi should therefore be removed from the list of candidates.

Mr. Göktürk (Turkey): I also simply wish to announce the withdrawal of three of the four Turkish candidates, namely, Mr. Aykut Kiliç, Ms. Ayla Songor and Mr. Cenk Alp Durak. The remaining Turkish candidate for the seat yet to be filled is therefore Mr. Aydin Sefa Akay.

Mr. Jagne (Gambia): First of all, I would like to thank all those who voted for our candidate, Mr. Hassan Bubacarr Jallow.

To facilitate the balloting in the next round, I would like, on behalf of the Gambia, to withdraw the candidacy of Mr. Sourahata Babouccar Semega-Janneh.

Mr. Helg (Switzerland) (*spoke in French*): The Swiss delegation would like to thank all the delegations that gave their support to the three Swiss candidates.

We would like to announce the withdrawal of the candidacies of Mr. Dick F. Marty and Mr. Robert Roth, while confirming the continued candidacy of Mr. Stefan Trechsel.

Mr. Morales (Panama) (*spoke in Spanish*): I wish to announce that the delegation of Panama is withdrawing the candidacy of Mr. Oscar Ceville, while reaffirming that of Mr. Cesar Pereira Burgos.

The meeting was suspended at 1.55 p.m. and resumed at 3 p.m.

The President: As announced this morning, the General Assembly will now proceed to another unrestricted ballot to fill the remaining vacancy on the International Tribunal for the Prosecution of Persons Responsible for Serious Violations of International Humanitarian Law Committed on the Territory of the Former Yugoslavia since 1991.

I wish to inform Members that, by note verbale dated 12 June 2001, the Permanent Mission of Australia to the United Nations has announced that Mr. Jeremy Badgery-Parker, Mr. John Foster Gallop and Mr. Tom Farquhar Shepherdson have decided to withdraw their names from the list of candidates. Accordingly, their names and the names of the nine candidates whose withdrawal were announced before the suspension have been struck from the ballot papers.

I should like to remind Members that, pursuant to rule 88 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly, no representative shall interrupt the voting except on a point of order on the actual conduct of the voting.

We shall now begin the voting process.

I request representatives to use only those ballot papers that have been distributed. Only those candidates whose names appear on the ballot papers are eligible for election. Representatives will indicate the one candidate for whom they wish to vote by placing a cross at the left of his or her name on the ballot papers. Ballot papers on which more than one name is marked will be considered invalid. Votes may be cast only for those whose names appear on the ballot papers.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Hovhannisyan (Armenia), Ms. Martins (Brazil), Mr. Kristjansson (Iceland), Ms. Mesquita (Portugal), Mr. Al-Jomae (Saudi Arabia), Ms. Syptak (United States of America) and Mr. Loedel (Uruguay) acted as tellers.

A vote was taken by secret ballot.

The meeting was suspended at 3.30 p.m. and resumed at 4.10 p.m.

The President: The result of the voting is as follows:

Number of ballot papers:	162
Number of invalid ballots:	1
Number of valid ballots:	161
Abstentions:	2
Number of members voting:	159
Required absolute majority:	96
Number of votes obtained:	
Ms. Vonimbolana Rasoazanany (Madagascar)	57
Mr. Stefan Trechsel (Switzerland)	22
Ms. Jane Hamilton Mathews (Australia)	20
Mr. Pierre G. Boutet (Canada)	15
Mr. Cesar Pereira Burgos (Panama)	15
Mr. Aydin Sefa Akay (Turkey)	13
Ms. Irene Chirwa Mambilima (Zambia)	9
Mr. Augustin P. Lobejón (Spain)	4
Mr. Léopold Ntahompagaze (Burundi)	4
Ms. Lucy Asuagbor (Cameroon)	0
Mr. Moïse Ebongue (Cameroon)	0
Mr. Mathew Epuli (Cameroon)	0
Ms. Suzanne Mengue Zomo (Cameroon)	0

The President: Since no candidate has obtained an absolute majority, the Assembly will have to proceed to another ballot to fill the remaining vacancy. In accordance with the decision taken earlier, that ballot shall be unrestricted.

I call on the representative of Burundi.

Mr. Ndizeye (Burundi): My delegation would like to congratulate those who were elected this morning. In order to speed the process, we wish to withdraw our candidate from the ballot. We express our sincere gratitude to all the delegations that voted for our candidate.

The President: I call on the representative of Panama.

Mr. Morales (Panama) (*spoke in Spanish*): The delegation of Panama wishes to withdraw the candidature of Mr. Cesar Pereira Burgos in order to speed the election process. I take this opportunity to thank delegations for their support for our candidate.

The President: I call on the representative of Spain.

Mr. Flores (Spain) (*spoke in Spanish*): My delegation thanks those delegations that voted for our two candidates. We wish to withdraw the candidature of Mr. Augustin P. Lobejón.

The President: Members have heard the statements just made by the representatives of Burundi, Panama and Spain. I take it that those representatives are informing the General Assembly that Mr. Léopold Ntahompagaze, Mr. Cesar Pereira Burgos and Mr. Augustin P. Lobejón, on the list of candidates established by the Security Council, have decided to withdraw their names from the list. Accordingly, those names should be struck from the ballot paper.

In view of the fact that new ballot papers will need to be prepared to take into account the withdrawal that has just been announced, I propose to suspend the meeting for 10 minutes. May I take it that the Assembly agrees to that proposal?

It was so decided.

The meeting was suspended at 4.20 p.m. and resumed at 4.35 p.m.

The President: The General Assembly will now proceed to the third unrestricted ballot to fill the remaining vacancy. Taking into account the statements by the representatives of Burundi, Panama and Spain, the ballot papers to be distributed will therefore have 10 candidates.

I should like to remind Members that, pursuant to rule 88 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly, no representative shall interrupt the voting except on a point of order on the actual conduct of the voting.

Ballot papers are now being distributed. I request all delegations to use only those ballot papers that have been distributed. Only those candidates whose names appear on the ballot papers are eligible for election.

Representatives should indicate the candidate for whom they wish to vote by placing a cross at the left of his or her name on the ballot paper. Any ballot paper on which more than one name is marked will be considered invalid. Votes may be cast only for those whose names appear on the ballot papers.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Hovhannisyan (Armenia), Mrs. Martins (Brazil), Mr. Kristjansson (Iceland), Ms. Mesquita (Portugal), Mr. Albadi (Saudi Arabia) and Ms. Syptak (United States of America) acted as tellers.

At vote was taken by secret ballot.

The meeting was suspended at 4.45 p.m. and resumed at 5.20 p.m.

The President: The result of the voting is as follows:

Number of ballot papers:	158
Number of invalid ballots:	1
Number of valid ballots:	157
Abstentions:	2
Number of members voting:	155
Required absolute majority:	96
Number of votes obtained:	
Ms. Vonimbolana Rasoazanany (Madagascar)	90
Mr. Stefan Trechsel (Switzerland)	24
Ms. Jane Hamilton Mathews (Australia)	20
Mr. Pierre G. Boutet (Canada)	13
Mr. Aydin Sefa Akay (Turkey)	9
Ms. Irene Chirwa Mambilima (Zambia)	5
Ms. Suzanne Mengue Zomo (Cameroon)	1
Ms. Lucy Asuagbor (Cameroon)	0
Mr. Moise Ebongue (Cameroon)	0
Mr. Mathew Epuli (Cameroon)	0

The President: Since again no candidate has obtained an absolute majority, the Assembly will have to proceed to another ballot to fill the remaining vacancy. In accordance with the decision taken earlier, that ballot shall be unrestricted.

Ms. Wensley (Australia): In the light of the results just announced for the last ballot, and in the interests of having a conclusion to this balloting today, I should like to announce the withdrawal of the Australian candidate, Ms. Jane Mathews. I would like to thank colleagues who have given us their support, and I hope that we may have a successful outcome to the next round.

Mr. Öztürk (Turkey): First, I should like to congratulate those candidates who were elected during the first run. I also thank the countries that supported our candidate. I should like to inform the Assembly that the candidature of Mr. Aydin Sefa Akay is withdrawn.

Mr. Musambachime (Zambia): I should like to inform the Assembly that the candidature of Ms. Irene Mambilima is being withdrawn. I should like to thank all the countries that have supported us, and I hope that this will contribute to a speedy conclusion of the vote.

Mr. Adsett (Canada): I should like to thank the representatives here who supported Canadian candidates. However, in the light of the ballots received in the last round, I should like also to withdraw our candidate, Pierre Boutet, and wish us all the best of luck in concluding these elections.

The President: In view of the fact that new ballot papers will need to be prepared to take into account the withdrawals that have just been announced, I propose to suspend the meeting for 15 minutes. May I take it that the Assembly agrees to that proposal?

It was so decided.

The meeting was suspended at 5.25 p.m and resumed at 6.10 p.m.

The President: The General Assembly will now proceed to the fourth unrestricted ballot to fill the remaining vacancy.

Taking into account the statements made by the representatives of Australia, Canada, Turkey and Zambia, the ballot papers to be distributed will therefore bear the names of six candidates.

Before we begin the voting process, I should like to remind Members that, pursuant to rule 88 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly, no representative shall interrupt the voting except on a point of order on the actual conduct of the voting.

We shall now begin the voting process.

I request representatives to use only those ballot papers that have been distributed. Only those candidates whose names appear on the ballot papers are eligible for election. Representatives will indicate the one candidate for whom they wish to vote by placing a cross at the left of his or her name on the ballot papers. Ballot papers on which more than one name is marked will be considered invalid. Votes may be cast only for those whose names appear on the ballot papers.

At the invitation of the invitation of the President, Mr. Hovhannisyan (Armenia), Ms. Martins (Brazil), Mr. Kristjansson (Iceland), Ms. Mesquita (Portugal), Mr. Al-Badi (Saudi Arabia) and Ms. Syptak (United States of America) acted as tellers.

A vote was taken by secret ballot.

The meeting was suspended at 5.50 p.m. and resumed at 6.10 p.m.

The President: The result of the voting is as follows:

Number of ballot papers:	148
Number of invalid ballots:	0
Number of valid ballots:	148
Abstentions:	2
Number of members voting:	146
Required absolute majority:	96
Number of votes obtained:	
Ms. Vonimbolana Rasoazanany (Madagascar)	120
Mr. Stefan Trechsel (Switzerland)	25
Ms. Suzanne Mengue Zomo (Cameroon)	1
Ms. Lucy Asuagbor (Cameroon)	0
Mr. Moïse Ebongue (Cameroon)	0
Mr. Mathew Epuli (Cameroon)	0

The President: Having obtained an absolute majority, Ms. Vonimbolana Rasoazanany of Madagascar is elected an ad litem judge of the International Tribunal.

Having obtained an absolute majority, the following 27 candidates are elected ad litem judges of the International Tribunal for a four-year term beginning 12 June 2001: Ms. Carmen María Argibay (Argentina), Mr. Hans Henrik Brydensholt (Denmark), Mr. Guibril Camara (Senegal), Mr. Joaquin Martin Canivell (Spain), Mr. Romeo Capulong (Philippines), Mr. Arthur Chaskalson (South Africa), Ms. Maureen Harding Clark (Ireland), Ms. Fatoumata Diarra (Mali), Mr. Albin Eser (Germany), Mr. Mohamed Al Habib Fassi Fihri (Morocco), Mr. Claude Hanoteau (France), Mr. Hassan Bubacarr Jallow (Gambia), Ms. Ivana Janů (Czech Republic), Mr. Per-Johan Lindholm (Finland), Mr. Rafael Nieto-Navia (Colombia), Mr. Mauro Politi (Italy), Ms. Vonimbolana Rasoazanany (Madagascar), Mr. Ralph Riachy (Lebanon), Mr. Amarjeet Singh

(Singapore), Mr. Albertus Henricus Joannes Swart (Netherlands), Mr. György Szénási (Hungary), Mr. Chikako Taya (Japan), Mr. Krister Thelin (Sweden), Ms. Christine Van Den Wyngaert (Belgium), Mr. Volodymyr Vassylenko (Ukraine), Mr. Lal Chand Vohrah (Malaysia) and Ms. Sharon Williams (Canada).

I take this opportunity to extend to the ad litem judges the congratulations of the Assembly on their elections and to thank the tellers for their assistance.

We have thus concluded this stage of our consideration of agenda item 166.

The meeting rose at 6.15 p.m.

United Nations A/55/PV.103

General Assembly

Fifty-fifth session

Official Records

103rd plenary meeting
Thursday, 14 June 2001, 3 p.m.
New York

President: Mr. Holkeri ..... (Finland)

The meeting was called to order at 3 p.m.

Reports of the Fifth Committee

The President: The General Assembly will now consider the reports of the Fifth Committee on agenda items 115, 116, 116 and 117, 116 and 123, 117, 122, 123, 126, 129, 130 (a), 132 to 137, 138 (a) and (b), 140, 143, 144, 148, 150, 152, 153 (a), 167, 169 and 176.

I request the Rapporteur of the Fifth Committee, Mr. Eduardo Manuel da Fonseca Fernandes Ramos of Portugal, to introduce the reports of the Fifth Committee in one intervention.

Mr. Ramos (Portugal), Rapporteur of the Fifth Committee: I have the honour today to present to the General Assembly the reports of the Fifth Committee pertaining to the second part of the resumed fifty-fifth session of the Committee.

Regarding agenda item 115, entitled "Financial reports and audited financial statements, and reports of the Board of Auditors", the report of the Fifth Committee is contained in document A/55/689/Add.2. In paragraph 6 of that report, the Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of a draft resolution which was adopted by the Committee without a vote.

In connection with agenda item 116, entitled "Review of the efficiency of the administrative and financial functioning of the United Nations", the Committee considered the report of the Office of Internal Oversight Services on the inspection of the consolidation of technical support services in the Department of General Assembly Affairs and Conference Services, document A/55/803. The report of the Fifth Committee on this question is contained in document A/55/532/Add.3. In paragraph 7 of that report, the Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of two draft decisions. Draft decision I is entitled "Report of the Office of Internal Oversight Services", and draft decision II is entitled "Action taken on certain documents". Both draft decisions were adopted by the Fifth Committee without a vote.

Under the same agenda item, the Committee considered the report of the Joint Inspection Unit on the review of management and administration in the Registry of the International Court of Justice, document A/55/834. The report of the Fifth Committee on this question is contained in document A/55/982. In paragraph 6 of that report, the Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of one draft resolution, which was adopted by the Committee without a vote.

The report on the delegation of authority for management of human and financial resources in the United Nations Secretariat and the report on the proposed regulations governing the status, basic rights and duties of officials other than Secretariat officials and experts on mission and regulations governing the status, basic rights and duties of the Secretary-General were also considered by the Committee under agenda

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item 123, entitled "Human resources management". The report of the Committee on both questions is contained in document A/55/983. In paragraph 9 of that report, the Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of two draft decisions, which were adopted by the Committee without a vote.

Continuing with agenda item 123, the report of the Committee on this item is contained in document A/55/890/Add.1. In paragraph 7 of that report, the Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of one draft resolution, which was adopted by the Committee without a vote.

The report of the Committee regarding two questions relating to the programme budget for the biennium 2000-2001, under agenda item 117, is contained in document A/55/713/Add.2, particularly the question of the proposed programme budget outline for the biennium 2002-2003 for the International Trade Centre United Nations Conference for Trade and Development/World Trade Organization. In paragraph 7 of that report, the Committee recommends the adoption of one draft decision, which was adopted by the Committee without a vote.

In connection with agenda item 126, "Report of the Secretary-General on the activities of the Office of Internal Oversight Services", the report of the Committee is contained in document A/55/888/Add.1. In paragraph 6 of that report, the Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of one draft resolution, which was adopted by the Committee without a vote.

Under agenda item 122, "Scale of assessments for the apportionment of the expenses of the United Nations", the report of the Committee is contained in document A/55/521/Add.3. In paragraph 5 of that report, the Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of one draft decision, which was adopted by the Committee without a vote.

Under agenda item 169, "Scale of assessments for the apportionment of the expenses of United Nations peacekeeping operations", the report of the Committee is contained in document A/55/712/Add.1. In paragraph 4 of that report, the Committee agreed that no action be taken on the report of the Secretary-General on information on implementation of General Assembly resolutions 55/235 and 55/236.

As to the 18 items on the financing of peacekeeping operations, the Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of 17 draft resolutions and one draft decision, which were adopted by the Committee without a vote, except for the draft resolution on the financing of the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon, which was adopted by the Committee with a recorded vote of 113 to 2 against. The report of the Committee on the financing of the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon, under agenda item 138 (b), is contained in document A/55/681/Add.1.

As regards agenda item 153, "Administrative and budgetary aspects of the financing of the United Nations peacekeeping operations", the Committee considered a number of issues under this agenda item, such as the question of the support account for peacekeeping operations, the financing of the United Nations Logistics Base at Brindisi, the use of resident auditors, reformed procedures for determining reimbursement to Member States for contingent-owned equipment and troop costs, death and disability benefits, and the reports of the Office of Internal Oversight Services on peacekeeping operations. The report of the Committee on these issues is contained in document A/55/534/Add.2.

In paragraph 19 of the report, the Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of four draft resolutions on the question of the support account for peacekeeping operations; the financing of the United Nations Logistics Base at Brindisi; the use of resident auditors; and the question of reformed procedures for determining reimbursement to Member States for contingent-owned equipment and troop costs, which were adopted by the Committee without a vote.

In paragraph 20 of the report, the Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of two draft decisions, one on the reports of the Office of Internal Oversight Services on peacekeeping operations and the other on death and disability benefits. Both draft decisions were adopted by the Committee without a vote.

The President: If there is no proposal under rule 66 of the rules of procedure, I shall take it that the General Assembly decides not to discuss the reports of the Fifth Committee which are before the Assembly today.

It was so decided.

The President: Statements will therefore be limited to explanations of vote.

The positions of delegations regarding the recommendations of the Fifth Committee have been made clear in the Committee and are reflected in the relevant official records.

May I remind members that, under paragraph 7 of decision 34/401, the General Assembly agreed that

> "When the same draft resolution is considered in a Main Committee and in plenary meeting, a delegation should, as far as possible, explain its vote only once, i.e., either in the Committee or in plenary meeting unless that delegation's vote in plenary meeting is different from its vote in the Committee."

May I remind delegations that, also in accordance with General Assembly decision 34/401, explanations of vote are limited to 10 minutes and should be made by delegations from their seats.

Before we begin to take action on the recommendations contained in the reports of the Fifth Committee, I would like to advise representatives that we shall proceed to take decisions in the same manner as was done in the Fifth Committee, unless the Secretariat is notified otherwise. This means that where recorded or separate votes were taken, we will do the same. I should also hope that we may proceed to adopt without a vote those recommendations that were adopted without a vote in the Fifth Committee.

Agenda item 115 (*continued*)

Financial reports and audited financial statements, and reports of the Board of Auditors

Report of the Fifth Committee (A/55/689/Add.2)

The President: The Assembly will now take a decision on the draft resolution recommended by the Fifth Committee in paragraph 6 of its report. The Fifth Committee adopted the draft resolution without a vote. May I consider that the Assembly wishes to do likewise?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 55/220 C).

The President: I call on the representative of Pakistan for an explanation of vote.

Mr. Chaudhry (Pakistan): We are happy that the Assembly is today adopting a number of draft resolutions and decisions that were so painstakingly finalized in the Fifth Committee, including the one just adopted.

I am taking the floor to point out that the resolution just adopted, as well as many others that we seek to adopt today, contains the phrase "taking note of". Our understanding of that term is that it is a neutral phrase that merely takes cognizance of the fact that a report has been presented. "Taking note of" does not accord either approval or disapproval. For years, the General Assembly has been taking note of reports on this understanding.

We joined the consensus in the Fifth Committee on this clear understanding, which I believe is shared by all delegations. However, we wish to take this opportunity to point out our reservations on the misleading legal opinion given in document A/C.5/55/42. We are not convinced of the need for the Legal Counsel to have created this unnecessary and avoidable confusion on the meaning of this term. We hope that corrective action will be taken by the Legal Counsel and that this misleading opinion will be withdrawn.

The President: We have thus concluded our consideration of agenda item 115.

Agenda item 116 (*continued*)

Review of the efficiency of the administrative and financial functioning of the United Nations

Report of the Fifth Committee (A/55/532/Add.3)

The President: The Assembly will now take a decision on the two draft decisions recommended by the Fifth Committee in paragraph 7 of its report.

We turn first to draft decision I, entitled "Report of the Office of Internal Oversight Services". The Fifth Committee adopted the draft decision without a vote. May I take it that the General Assembly wishes to do likewise?

Draft decision I was adopted.

The President: The Fifth Committee adopted draft decision II, entitled "Action taken on certain documents", without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

Draft decision II was adopted.

The President: We have thus concluded this stage of our consideration of agenda item 116.

Agenda items 116 and 117 (*continued*)

Review of the efficiency of the administrative and financial functioning of the United Nations

Programme budget for the biennium 2000-2001

Report of the Fifth Committee (A/55/982)

The President: The Assembly will now take a decision on the draft resolution recommended by the Fifth Committee in paragraph 6 of its report.

The Fifth Committee adopted the draft resolution, entitled "Report of the Joint Inspection Unit on the review of management and administration in the Registry of the International Court of Justice", without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 55/257).

The President: We have thus concluded this stage of our consideration of agenda items 116 and 117.

Agenda items 116 and 123 (*continued*)

Review of the efficiency of the administrative and financial functioning of the United Nations

Human resources management

Report of the Fifth Committee (A/55/983)

The President: The Assembly will now take a decision on the two draft decisions recommended by the Fifth Committee in paragraph 9 of its report.

We turn first to draft decision I. The Fifth Committee adopted draft decision I, entitled "Report of the Joint Inspection Unit on the delegation of authority for management of human and financial resources in the United Nations Secretariat", without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

Draft decision I was adopted.

The President: The Fifth Committee adopted draft decision II, entitled "Proposed regulations governing the status, basic rights and duties of officials other than Secretariat officials and experts on mission and regulations governing the status, basic rights and duties of the Secretary-General", without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

Draft decision II was adopted.

The President: We have thus concluded this stage of our consideration of agenda items 116 and 123.

Agenda item 117 (*continued*)

Programme budget for the biennium 2000-2001

Report of the Fifth Committee (A/55/713/Add.2)

The President: The Assembly will now take a decision on the draft decision recommended by the Fifth Committee in paragraph 7 of its report.

The Fifth Committee adopted the draft decision, entitled "Outline of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2002-2003 for the International Trade Centre UNCTAD/WTO", without a vote. May I consider that the Assembly wishes to do likewise?

The draft decision was adopted.

The President: We have thus concluded this stage of our consideration of agenda item 117.

Mr. Dos Santos (Mozambique), Vice-President, took the Chair.

Agenda item 122 (*continued*)

Scale of assessments for the apportionment of the expenses of the United Nations

Report of the Fifth Committee (A/55/521/Add.3)

The Acting President: The Assembly will now take a decision on the draft decision recommended by the Fifth Committee in paragraph 5 of its report.

The Fifth Committee adopted the draft decision without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do likewise?

The draft decision was adopted.

The Acting President: We have thus concluded this stage of our consideration of agenda item 122.

Agenda item 123 (*continued*)

Human resources management

Report of the Fifth Committee (A/55/890/Add.1)

The Acting President: The Assembly will now take a decision on the draft resolution recommended by the Fifth Committee in paragraph 7 of its report.

The Fifth Committee adopted the draft resolution without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 55/258).

The Acting President: I shall now give the floor to those representatives who wish to make statements in explanation of position.

Mr. Dugan (United States of America): The ongoing reform of United Nations human resources management is robust with today's milestone consensus. It enables the Secretary-General to implement the results-based management programme under way for a more effective, efficient and accountable Organization.

The most valuable asset for any organization is its staff, implementing its goals and objectives. In this Organization, the staff each day faces compelling yet daunting mandates, from peace and security to dealing with aggressors, from economic development to outer space law, and from hosting global conferences to answering email from schoolchildren.

Member States are also aware that United Nations human resource management activities figure into about two thirds of its budgetary outlays. The Secretary-General's ambitious human resources management proposals, ripened during the past eight months of Assembly consideration, bear fruit today for implementing the future's compelling yet daunting mandates.

The United Nations Office of Human Resources Management now may devote greater attention to human resources policy development and the monitoring of departmental human resources action plans.

The United States delegation looks forward to the enhancement of human resources planning processes, the further simplification of rules and the development of guidelines and task tools for inclusion in the electronic version of the human resources handbook; the implementation of a new system of recruitment, placement and promotion; the introduction of mechanisms to stimulate the mobility of staff; further improvements in the internal justice system, including the appointment of an ombudsman; the integration of core and managerial competencies into recruitment, staff development and performance appraisal; the strengthening of the components of a career development system for all staff; and the further implementation of work-life policies.

My delegation understands that this reform programme is slated to be fully operational by early 2002. We know that several issues will continue to be included on the agenda, such as contractual mechanisms, the under-representation of some nationalities, Administrative Tribunal matters and reviewing the International Civil Service Commission and the Joint Appeals Board. We look forward to the Secretary-General's progress report to the fifty-seventh session of the General Assembly.

Today's consensus shows how the Secretariat and membership's shared responsibilities for programme planning and resource stewardship were designed to work hand in hand so as to give body and soul to the principles of the United Nations Charter. It is what the head of the Office of Human Resources Management, Rafiah Salim, hailed as a historic decision in the annals of human resources management in this Organization.

This was accomplished thanks to a desire by all to move forward, enhanced cooperation within the Fifth Committee and a growing trust between Member States and the Office of Human Resources Management.

The United States delegation wishes to thank the Bureau of the Fifth Committee, Member State colleagues and the Secretariat for exemplary service towards the goal of a results-oriented and accountable United Nations.

Mr. Duval (Canada) (*spoke in French*): I have the honour to speak on behalf of Australia, Canada and New Zealand in explanation of position following the adoption of the resolution of human resources management.

This resolution endorses the Secretary-General's vision of a more effective and dynamic staff that is able

to meet the challenges faced by the United Nations. In addition, we believe that the changes made in this resolution will enhance the ability of the United Nations to attract and retain high-quality staff who are committed to the goals of the Organization.

The resolution that we have just adopted is lengthy yet very clear in its endorsement of the Secretary-General's reform package. It is also extremely clear with respect to the next steps that should be taken in the area of reform and the information that is necessary for the General Assembly to further pursue the modernization of the process.

We recognize that this resolution is being adopted almost six months after the close of the main part of the fifty-fifth regular session of the General Assembly and within a few short months of the beginning of the fifty-sixth regular session. Therefore, it will be extremely difficult for the Secretary-General to meet some of the reporting deadlines outlined in the draft resolution.

(*spoke in English*)

Canada's delegation is particularly pleased that this resolution will lead to major changes to the recruitment process, which will result in shorter recruitment times, especially for unplanned vacancies, a more objective selection process, and clear lines of authority and responsibility for making hiring decisions.

The section on mobility of staff is a clear recognition by the Secretary-General and Member States that this is no longer simply a Headquarters-based Organization. Movement of staff within and between duty stations will enhance not only their career prospects but also effectiveness and cooperation within divisions and departments, regional commissions and in field duty stations.

Canada's delegation would like to congratulate Mr. Aizaz Chowdhry of Pakistan for his hard work and dedication in coordinating this resolution. His impartiality, candour and confidence in the process are a major reason we were able to adopt the resolution today.

Finally, we wish to sincerely thank all of the members of the Secretariat who helped us in our deliberations on this agenda item. We the representatives of the Member States have now completed our work on this issue. However, the task of implementing the reform is just beginning, and we wish the Secretariat every success in this crucial phase.

Mr. Lenefors (Sweden): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union, the Central and Eastern European countries associated with the European Union — Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia — and the associated countries Cyprus, Turkey and Malta, as well as the European Free Trade Association country member of the European Economic Area, Norway, align themselves with this statement.

It is with considerable satisfaction that we have adopted the resolution on human resources management. The negotiations were both lengthy and difficult, but, thanks to the willingness to compromise and the flexibility shown by all delegations, a consensus resolution was found.

The final outcome is indeed a vote of confidence in the Secretary-General's vision, to echo the words of the Assistant Secretary-General for Human Resources Management, Ms. Rafiah Salim. Human resources management reform is a determining factor in the continued improvement of United Nations programmes and of their practical effects, and it will improve the Organization's ability to attract and retain highly qualified staff. The resolution will, inter alia, increase mobility in the Secretariat, shorten the time of recruitment both in the Secretariat and in peacekeeping missions, provide for real delegation of authority to programme managers and ensure the development of a culture of continuous learning, in which the United Nations staff college will play a key role.

With respect to the General Service to Professional examinations, the European Union fully endorses the understanding shared by all delegations and clearly expressed by the coordinator of the informal consultations on this item prior to the adoption of the draft resolution. The delicate balance now achieved enables us to limit the effects of over-representation while at the same time preserving career development opportunities for a proportion of the most qualified General Service staff.

I will now conclude by adding some words of thanks. Normally, of course, this would be done at the last formal meeting of the Committee, but the perhaps rather embarrassing truth is that we were not optimistic enough to believe that we could actually finish our

negotiations on time — which we did. Thus, we were not fully prepared for that joyful occasion and made only a very short statement at the last formal meeting of the Committee.

The successful outcome of our deliberations could not have been reached without the tireless efforts of our coordinator, Mr. Aizaz Ahmad Chaudhry of Pakistan. His professionalism and his thorough grasp of all the intricate issues at hand, in combination with his optimism and his fabulous sense of humour, made him just the right man for the job. We are all indebted to him.

However, the draft resolution, of course, had to be accepted by every delegation, and thus all delegations had to rise to the occasion, as the saying goes. And that, we actually did — all of us. On behalf of the European Union, I would like to express our great appreciation to all our colleagues. I certainly would not like to exclude anyone, but since my time is limited I will bow to necessity and ask the Chairman of the Group of 77 and China please to convey our thanks to all the members of his group. The sense of camaraderie and can-do that characterized our discussions was greatly facilitated by Iran's chairmanship of the Group of 77 and China. We would also like to thank the delegations of Canada, Australia and New Zealand for their always constructive interventions, and the delegations of Norway and of the United States for their important contributions.

No statement on the human resources management resolution would be complete, of course, without our sincere words of thanks to the representatives of the Office of Human Resources Management. The able leadership of Ms. Salim and her team — I should rightly say, "her dream team" — gave great support to us all. We also thank the members of the Bureau, the secretariat of the Committee and, in particular, the Chairman of the Fifth Committee, Ambassador Rosenthal, for his able leadership. To the long list of important draft resolutions adopted in the Fifth Committee during this session, including such important texts as those on the application of article 19 of the Charter and the new scales of assessment, the Chairman of the Committee can now also add important texts on reimbursement to Member States for contingent-owned equipment and troop costs, as well as this omnibus resolution on human resources management.

Mr. Nakkari (Syrian Arab Republic) (*spoke in Arabic*): My delegation echoes the words of other delegations that have explained their position on the valuable resolution we have just adopted. Its value lies principally in the importance and sensitivity of its subject: the staff of the United Nations, who define the identity of the Organization. Everywhere, they are the active troops in the field, working to fulfil the mandates assigned by the General Assembly.

In that light, the General Assembly has always made it clear that the staff constitutes a valuable resource; this has also been the view of all Secretaries-General. Hence, my delegation considers that the level of consultation with the staff on all proposals placed before the Fifth Committee — whether at the fifty-sixth session or at the fifty-seventh session — should be commensurate with our understanding that they are a valuable resource. Their views, independent of the views of the Secretary-General, should be fully stated, so that we can form a clear and accurate understanding of their opinions, their concerns and their ideas.

Naturally, there are many areas in which the Assembly wants to consult the staff, including transfers, the administration of justice and other areas set out in the resolution we have just adopted. My delegation considers that this has been set out clearly and unambiguously, and it is our view that there is no further need to consult any department, including the Office of Legal Affairs, on the provisions of the resolution: even when such consultations take place, they are carried out before the Assembly adopts a draft resolution. With respect to consultations to interpret General Assembly mandates, they fall within the exclusive rights of the Assembly itself, which has the authority to explain such provisions. No other body has the authority to interpret them. We would request that, when reports are submitted in the future and when any procedures are adopted, these be formulated in the light of that understanding, and that General Assembly mandates be interpreted strictly.

I echo the comments of the representative of Pakistan concerning the words "takes note".

Our sincere appreciation goes to the representative of the current Presidency of the European Union for his own expression of thanks to Member States. Flexibility, of course, was the hallmark of the Fifth Committee's work towards the adoption of this resolution. There is no doubt that constructive

cooperation among all delegations made it possible to agree on that important text. My thanks go also to the Assistant Secretary-General for Human Resources Management, Ms. Rafiah Salim, and to her team for all their help.

I thank the Chairman of the Fifth Committee for all his efforts throughout the session to guide our work to a successful outcome. Further, we convey sincere thanks to the coordinator of the informal consultations on item 123, who made tremendous efforts to achieve consensus. We greatly appreciate those efforts, and we appreciate his having corrected errors we had noted during the Committee's adoption of the draft resolution. We hope that it will become standard practice in the future for coordinators to take it upon themselves to review the language of draft resolutions before and after they are reproduced, with a view to ensuring that what has been agreed in informal consultations is accurately reflected in the texts adopted by Committees and by the General Assembly. That would protect the credibility of the Assembly's committees and would surely prevent us from making mistakes such as those we noted during the second resumption of the Fifth Committee's session.

Mr. Bouheddou (Algeria) (*spoke in French*): Like others, my delegation welcomes the adoption of the resolution on human resources management and expresses its great appreciation of the work done by the representative of Pakistan, coordinator of the discussions on this resolution.

The Acting President: The Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda item 123.

Agenda item 126 (*continued*)

Report of the Secretary-General on the activities of the Office of Internal Oversight Services

Report of the Fifth Committee (A/55/888/Add.1)

The Acting President: The Assembly will now take a decision on the draft resolution recommended by the Fifth Committee in paragraph 6 of its report. The Fifth Committee adopted the draft resolution without a vote. May I consider that the Assembly wishes to do likewise?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 55/259).

The Acting President: The Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda item 126.

Agenda item 129

Financing of the United Nations Angola Verification Mission and the United Nations Observer Mission in Angola

Report of the Fifth Committee (A/55/964)

The Acting President: The Assembly will now take a decision on the draft resolution recommended by the Fifth Committee in paragraph 6 of its report. The Fifth Committee adopted the draft resolution without a vote. May I consider that the Assembly wishes to do likewise?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 55/260).

The Acting President: The Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda item 129.

Agenda item 130

Financing of the activities arising from Security Council resolution 687 (1991)

(a) United Nations Iraq-Kuwait Observation Mission

Report of the Fifth Committee (A/55/971)

The Acting President: The Assembly will now take a decision on the draft resolution, entitled "Financing of the United Nations Iraq-Kuwait Observation Mission", recommended by the Fifth Committee in paragraph 6 of its report. The Fifth Committee adopted the draft resolution without a vote. May I consider that the Assembly wishes to do likewise?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 55/261).

The Acting President: The Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda item 130.

Agenda item 132

Financing of the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone

Report of the Fifth Committee (A/55/891/Add.1)

The Acting President: The Assembly will now take a decision on the draft resolution recommended by the Fifth Committee in paragraph 7 of its report. The Fifth Committee adopted the draft resolution without a vote. May I consider that the Assembly wishes to do likewise?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 55/251 B).

The Acting President: The Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda item 132.

Agenda item 133 (*continued*)

Financing of the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo

Report of the Fifth Committee (A/55/663/Add.1)

The Acting President: The Assembly will now take a decision on the draft resolution recommended by the Fifth Committee in paragraph 6 of its report. The Fifth Committee adopted the draft resolution without a vote. May I consider that the Assembly wishes to do likewise?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 55/227 B).

The Acting President: We have thus concluded this stage of our consideration of agenda item 133.

Mr. Abulhasan (Kuwait), Vice-President, took the Chair.

Agenda item 134 (*continued*)

Financing of the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor

Report of the Fifth Committee (A/55/664/Add.1)

The Acting President: The Assembly will now take a decision on the draft resolution recommended by the Fifth Committee in paragraph 6 of its report. The Fifth Committee adopted the draft resolution without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 55/228 B).

The Acting President: We have thus concluded this stage of our consideration of agenda item 134.

Agenda item 135

Financing of the United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara

Report of the Fifth Committee (A/55/966)

The Acting President: The Assembly will take a decision on the draft resolution recommended by the Fifth Committee in paragraph 6 of its report. The Fifth Committee adopted the draft resolution without a vote. May I consider that the Assembly also wishes to do the same?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 55/262).

The Acting President: We have thus concluded this stage of our consideration of agenda item 135.

Agenda item 136

Financing of the United Nations Mission of Observers in Tajikistan

Report of the Fifth Committee (A/55/972)

The Acting President: The Assembly will now take a decision on the draft resolution recommended by the Fifth Committee in paragraph 6 of its report. The Fifth Committee adopted the draft resolution without a vote. May I consider that the Assembly wishes to do likewise?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 55/263).

The Acting President: We have thus concluded this stage of our consideration of agenda item 136.

Agenda item 137

Financing of the United Nations Preventive Deployment Force

Report of the Fifth Committee (A/55/967)

The Acting President: The Assembly will now take a decision on the draft decision recommended by the Fifth Committee in paragraph 6 of its report. The Fifth Committee adopted the draft decision without a vote. May I consider that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

The draft decision was adopted.

The Acting President: We have thus concluded this stage of our consideration of agenda item 137.

Agenda item 138 (*continued*)

Financing of the United Nations peacekeeping forces in the Middle East

(a) United Nations Disengagement Observer Force

Report of the Fifth Committee (A/55/975)

The Acting President: The Assembly will now take a decision on the draft resolution recommended by the Fifth Committee in paragraph 7 of its report.

The Fifth Committee adopted the draft resolution, entitled "Financing of the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force", without a vote. May I consider that the Assembly wishes to do likewise?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 55/264).

The Acting President: We have thus concluded this stage of our consideration of sub-item (a) of agenda item 138.

(b) United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon

Report of the Fifth Committee (A/55/681/Add.1)

The Acting President: The Assembly will now take a decision on the draft resolution entitled "Financing of the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon, which was recommended by the Fifth Committee in paragraph 12 of its report.

A single separate vote has been requested on the fourth preambular paragraph and on operative paragraphs 2, 3 and 15 of the draft resolution. Is there any objection to that request? There is none.

I shall now put to the vote the fourth preambular paragraph and operative paragraphs 2, 3 and 15 of the draft resolution recommended in paragraph 12 of document A/55/681/Add.1, on which a single separate vote has been requested.

A recorded vote has been requested.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour:

Algeria, Argentina, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Belize, Bolivia, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Burkina Faso, Cambodia, Cape Verde, Chile, China, Colombia, Comoros, Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, Cuba, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, Ethiopia, Fiji, Guatemala, Guyana, Haiti, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kuwait, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Lebanon, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Malaysia, Maldives, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mexico, Mongolia, Morocco, Nepal, Nicaragua, Nigeria, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Peru, Philippines, Qatar, Russian Federation, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Singapore, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, Tunisia, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Republic of Tanzania, Venezuela, Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia

Against:

Israel, Marshall Islands, United States of America

Abstaining:

Andorra, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Canada, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Monaco, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Romania, San Marino, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Tonga, Turkey, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, Uruguay

The fourth preambular paragraph and operative paragraphs 2, 3, and 15 were retained by 70 votes to 3, with 42 abstentions.

The Acting President: I now put to the vote the draft resolution contained in paragraph 12 of document A/55/681/Add.1 as a whole.

A recorded vote has been requested.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour:

Algeria, Andorra, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Bahamas, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Belgium, Belize, Benin, Bolivia, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Cambodia, Canada, Cape Verde, Chile, China, Colombia, Comoros, Congo, Côte d'Ivoire, Croatia, Cuba, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, Estonia, Ethiopia, Fiji, Finland, France, Gabon, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Guatemala, Guyana, Haiti, Hungary, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kuwait, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Lebanon, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malaysia, Maldives, Malta, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mexico, Monaco, Mongolia, Morocco, Myanmar, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nicaragua, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Panama, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Romania, Russian Federation, San Marino, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sweden, Syrian Arab Republic, Thailand, Tonga, Tunisia, Turkey, Uganda, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United Republic of Tanzania, Uruguay, Venezuela, Viet Nam, Yemen, Zambia

Against:

Israel, Marshall Islands, United States of America

The draft resolution as a whole was adopted by 115 votes to 3 (resolution 55/180 B).

The Acting President: I shall now give the floor to those representatives who wish to make statements in explanation of vote.

Mr. Adam (Israel): As I reserved my right in the Committee to explain my delegation's vote, I am doing so now.

Members of the Assembly have all heard in the past our positions related to the Qana incident, in which the Hezbollah deliberately used the United Nations camp to launch Katyusha rockets at Israel and felt quite comfortable doing so from a safe place with a sizeable civilian population nearby.

I wish to remind the Assembly that there is no precedent whatsoever for a particular Member State's bearing sole financial responsibility for damage sustained by United Nations forces in the context of peacekeeping operations. It is understood that when peacekeepers are deployed in an area of conflict, they fully understand the dangers inherent in such a task. As such, any damage that is incurred should be absorbed by the general budget for peacekeeping operations, in accordance with the principle of collective responsibility.

I should like briefly to clarify a few facts on the unfortunate incident in Qana, which took place in April 1996.

First, the Hezbollah terrorist organization set up its ammunition base 300 metres from the United Nations camp in Qana, in southern Lebanon. It decided to do so knowing the danger to Lebanese civilians living in the camp, including possible damage to the property of the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon. Israel had officially warned the United Nations about this dangerous situation, but this did not succeed in causing Hezbollah to move.

After fortifying itself at the base, the Hezbollah fired dozens of Katyusha rockets on towns and villages in northern Israel. My country, as is the right of sovereign States anywhere in the world, cannot and will not tolerate bombs falling on its territories and will not stand by while people are being killed.

After three consecutive days of Hezbollah bombing from the base alongside the Qana camp, and after numerous warnings from Israel, including by Prime Minister Peres himself, the Israeli Defence Force had to put a stop to the firing and root out its source — the Hezbollah base.

No country would, or will ever, stand idly by and wait for days as rockets fall on its towns and cities, imperilling the lives of its citizens — no country.

On 24 May 2000, Israel completed the withdrawal of its forces from south Lebanon, in full accordance with Security Council resolution 425

(1978). That withdrawal was confirmed by the Secretary-General in document S/2000/590 and by the Security Council in its resolutions 1310 (2000) and 1337 (2000), as well as by statements by the President of the Security Council on 18 June 2000.

Nevertheless, Hezbollah continues to operate in the area with complete freedom. In the wake of Israel's withdrawal, Hezbollah quickly moved to fill the posts vacated by the Israeli army and now uses them as a base for attacks on Israeli soldiers and civilians.

In the last few months, Hezbollah has crossed the blue line, infiltrated Israeli territory and carried out a number of operations that have claimed the lives of Israeli soldiers. In addition, Hezbollah forces abducted three Israeli soldiers on 7 October 2001 who were patrolling the Israeli side of the blue line. To this day, we have no information on their whereabouts or their condition, as even the Red Cross has been prevented from visiting them.

Is there any country in the world that would accept not knowing a single detail about its personnel missing in action? No country — not the permanent members of the Security Council and not any other country — would accept such a situation. The Red Cross is silent; the Lebanese Government is silent; and the three soldiers are still missing.

Israel seeks a quiet and peaceful border to its north. We wish to see, and we will act resolutely to bring about, the return of international peace and security. In that connection, I should like to recall that in his report of 31 October 2000 the Secretary-General observed that the time had come to establish the state of affairs envisaged in Security Council resolution 425 (1978). That would require,

> "first and foremost, that the Government of Lebanon take effective control of the whole area vacated by Israel last spring and assume its full international responsibilities, including putting an end to the dangerous provocations that have continued on the Blue Line." (*S/2000/1049, para. 18*)

That has not yet been done, owing to various reasons.

Israel therefore calls again upon the Governments of Lebanon and of Syria to heed the call of the international community and comply fully with their obligations under the relevant resolutions of the Security Council and the principles of international law. We further call upon those Governments to proceed with the deployment of Lebanese armed forces up to the Blue Line to ensure the return of effective authority of the Government of Lebanon in the area and to prevent the activities of non-governmental elements operating in the territory under their control, so as to ensure the restoration of international peace and security. Those long-overdue actions would serve to ensure stability along the northern border while demonstrating a commitment to peace and security in the Middle East.

With respect to the budget of the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) suggested in the document before us, Israel maintains that UNIFIL should remain in its current area of operation as long as its mandate, as defined by Security Council resolution 425 (1978) has not been fulfilled in its entirety.

My delegation is once again distressed by the political manipulation of the Fifth Committee by certain Member States, and hopes that such action will stop; it diverts the attention of the Committee. I call upon Member States next year to drop the annual four paragraphs suggested with regard to Qana and dictated by the delegation of Lebanon, and to agree on the draft resolution, as we do on all draft resolutions in the Fifth Committee, by consensus. That principle of no voting has been reiterated by every single representative who has addressed the Committee in the past. Israel will gladly join consensus on a draft resolution on the financing of UNIFIL without the political elements that are introduced yearly.

The Acting President: A number of representatives have asked to speak in exercise of the right of reply. I remind members that statements in exercise of the right of reply are limited to 10 minutes for the first intervention and to five minutes for the second, and should be made by delegations from their seats.

Mr. Nakkari (Syrian Arab Republic) (*spoke in Arabic*): I had been reluctant to ask to speak in exercise of the right of reply. But, as we see from the report of the Fifth Committee, the representative of Israel was among those who spoke in explanation of vote on this item in the Committee, and the Assembly has been reminded that delegations that explain their votes in the Committee should refrain from doing so once again in the Assembly.

I wish to comment on some of the false allegations that the Assembly has grown used to hearing every year. The most insolent accusation was that some Member States have engaged in political manipulation. Member States have expressed the political will of the international community, and when States voted in favour of this draft resolution they were acknowledging that a deliberate crime had been committed against the symbol of the United Nations and the symbol of peace in our region: the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL), its personnel and its camp at Qana. A United Nations officer lost his life in that deliberate bombardment. We continue to recall that, at the time, the Secretary-General characterized it as a deliberate act. It was videotaped by one of the aeroplanes; the tape was shown in Europe, and images were published in many newspapers throughout the world. We therefore share the view that the bombing was deliberate. Thus, false claims that this was not a deliberate act are entirely out of place.

Moreover, Israel's responsibility in that regard cannot be confused with the collective responsibility for the financing of UNIFIL. Under international law, Israel bears liability for its deliberate bombing. Any party that deliberately commits a transgression, especially against the United Nations, must pay the price. Hence, linking this with Israel's withdrawal from southern Lebanon is entirely inconsistent with Israel's obligations.

We heard characterizations such as "the Hezbollah terrorist organization" (supra). That group, alongside other Lebanese resistance forces, compelled Israel to withdraw from the territory it had occupied. But the most insolent statement made by the representative of Israeli occupation was a call upon Syria and Lebanon to control the heroic acts of national resistance aimed at liberating their land.

We remind those who would make allegations in this regard that Lebanon exercises sovereignty over its territory. The heroic resistance in southern Lebanon enjoys Lebanon's complete support and that of my country. The call issued by the representative of Israel, and his allegations, are misleading and totally erroneous. Syria has always called for the return of a just and comprehensive peace that would restore all its rights. The resumption of negotiations is not an objective in itself; the objective is the restoration of rights. Syria has long called for a balanced, just and comprehensive peace on the basis of the relevant resolutions of the Security Council, with a withdrawal to the lines of 4 June 1967. Under those terms, Syria would indeed like to see a balanced, just and lasting peace.

Mr. Assaf (Lebanon) (*spoke in Arabic*): I am speaking in exercise of my right of reply to the statement made a moment ago by the representative of Israel.

He accused us of politicizing this matter, while he himself delved very deeply into a political issue that is far removed from the competence of the Fifth Committee. We believe that the representative of Israel was trying to escape by running forward. We would wish him to return to the subject at hand without addressing the political aspects. This is an administrative and financial matter and should remain so. In this context, I will reply point by point to the statement made by the representative of Israel.

First, concerning the politicization of the issue, we stress that all the additional paragraphs to this resolution called for by the Group of 77 are purely financial and administrative in nature. They contain no political wording whatsoever. Israel should not leap into political discourse, but should implement the resolutions of the General Assembly calling on it to pay compensation for the damages it caused to the compound of the international forces in southern Lebanon. All those present here will recall that 102 Lebanese civilians — children, the elderly and women — were killed in Israel's attack against Lebanon and the international forces compound. Had we wished to politicize the matter, we would have asked for additional paragraphs calling for compensation to Lebanon for damage to its facilities and civilian population.

Instead, the Group of 77 is calling for reparations and compensation for the United Nations, not for my country, Lebanon. The United Nations headquarters in Lebanon was damaged, as assessed by the Secretary-General, who sent a group of experts and engineers. They came up with a cost estimate of that damage, which the General Assembly adopted, calling on Israel to pay that amount. I repeat and stress that the compensation was to be paid to the United Nations, not to Lebanon.

In this regard, I would refer to paragraph 30 of the resolution, in which the Secretary-General is

encouraged to continue to take additional measures to ensure the safety and security of all personnel under the auspices of the United Nations participating in the Force. This is a generic paragraph, the inclusion of which in the resolution was not called for by the Group of 77. It is used in reference to every peacekeeping operation in the world. It calls for ensuring the safety and security of all personnel. Thus, how can the General Assembly be accused of politicizing the matter when it calls for reparations for damage to its own premises and headquarters? How can we accuse the United Nations or the General Assembly of politicizing this matter when we call for this and ask the Secretary-General to ensure the safety and security of United Nations forces?

Another point I wish to make is that we totally agree with Israel that my country was one of the first to sign the United Nations Charter. We also know that paragraph 2 of Article 17 of the Charter asserts the principle of collective responsibility, requiring the expenses of the Organization, including the budgets of peacekeeping operations throughout the world, to be borne by the Members as apportioned by the General Assembly. We cannot deny this, but I ask: Can we conclude from this principle of collective responsibility that any State, be it Israel or any other, may deliberately bomb the premises of international forces and then ask the rest of the world to pay reparations for the damages it has deliberately caused? Such an erroneous conclusion cannot be drawn from the principle of collective responsibility.

Moreover, such a conclusion is diametrically counter to the principle of international liability, by which a country that attacks another State or an international organization, such as the United Nations, must pay compensation for the damages incurred. This is precisely what Lebanon is calling for and what the Group of Arab States and the Group of 77 have kindly accepted to assume.

Another point relates to the use by Hezbollah of the United Nations compound to launch rockets at Israel. I will not speak at length on this issue, but I would refer the representative of Israel to the report of the Secretary-General and his Military Adviser, Major-General Franklin van Kappen, which was drafted by the most impartial entity. It states that:

> "during the shelling there had been a perceptible shift in the weight of fire from an area south-west of the compound (the mortar site) to the compound itself". (*S/1996/337, para. 11*)

It is very clear that the most impartial entity in this world is saying that Israel decided to bomb a certain point, for instance on the right, and then to shift to the left in order to attack the compound of the international forces and to harm them and the Lebanese civilians who had taken refuge there in the false belief that Israel would not dare to bomb an international compound. They were wrong, because Israel did dare and did bomb.

My last point relates to the prisoners of war. The representative of Israel claimed that three of its soldiers are being held in southern Lebanon. That is true. The Lebanese resistance has held three Israeli soldiers, as it has openly declared on television. However, does the representative of Israel know why the Lebanese resistance holds those soldiers? He does, but conveniently ignores it. There are 13 Lebanese prisoners of war being held without trial in Israeli prisons in Israel. Some have been held for almost 25 years. Does the representative of Israel know that there is a law in force in Israel — the Dirani and Obeid Law — which stipulates the detention of two Lebanese citizens against the wishes of the High Court of Justice of Israel?

Mr. Rajeh (Saudi Arabia) (*spoke in Arabic*): I will not speak at length. I was rather amazed, listening to the representative of the Zionist entity today, to hear him say that the cause of the bombing of the United Nations compound in Qana was the presence of a Hezbollah ammunition depot 300 metres from the compound itself.

At the time the draft resolutions were adopted in the Fifth Committee, I heard the same representative state that the reason for the Qana bombing was the Hezbollah occupation — and I repeat the word occupation — of the United Nations camp in that town and its launching of attacks on Israel from that camp for three days prior to Israel's action. Which of the two statements made by the representative of the Zionist entity should I believe?

It is no wonder that that representative has resorted to bald-faced lies. That is a job at which he excels. I advise him that instead of twisting the facts, the Zionist entity must recognize its act of aggression and pay the reparations to which it has been obligated by the General Assembly. It should do so if it respects

the Assembly and the international legality it represents.

The Acting President: We have thus concluded this stage of our consideration of sub-item (b) of agenda item 138.

Agenda item 140

Financing of the United Nations Protection Force, the United Nations Confidence Restoration Operation in Croatia, the United Nations Preventive Deployment Force and the United Nations Peace Forces headquarters

Report of the Fifth Committee (A/55/961)

The Acting President: The Assembly will now take a decision on the draft resolution recommended by the Fifth Committee in paragraph 7 of its report. The Fifth Committee adopted the draft resolution without a vote. May I consider that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 55/265).

The Acting President: We have thus concluded this stage of our consideration of agenda item 140.

Agenda item 143

Financing of the United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus

Report of the Fifth Committee (A/55/969)

The Acting President: The Assembly will now take a decision on the draft resolution recommended by the Fifth Committee in paragraph 6 of its report. The Fifth Committee adopted the draft resolution without a vote. May I consider that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 55/266).

The Acting President: We have thus concluded this stage of our consideration of agenda item 143.

Agenda item 144

Financing of the United Nations Observer Mission in Georgia

Report of the Fifth Committee (A/55/968)

The Acting President: The Assembly will now take a decision on the draft resolution recommended by the Fifth Committee in paragraph 6 of its report. The Fifth Committee adopted the draft resolution without a vote. May I consider that the Assembly wishes to do likewise?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 55/267).

The Acting President: We have thus concluded this stage of our consideration of agenda item 144.

Agenda item 148

Financing of the United Nations Mission in Bosnia and Herzegovina

Report of the Fifth Committee (A/55/965)

The Acting President: The Assembly will now take a decision on the draft resolution recommended by the Fifth Committee in paragraph 6 of its report. The Fifth Committee adopted the draft resolution without a vote. May I consider that the Assembly wishes to do likewise?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 55/268).

The Acting President: We have thus concluded this stage of our consideration of agenda item 148.

Agenda item 150

Financing of the United Nations Support Mission in Haiti, the United Nations Transition Mission in Haiti and the United Nations Civilian Police Mission in Haiti

Report of the Fifth Committee (A/55/963)

The Acting President: The Assembly will now take a decision on the draft resolution recommended by the Fifth Committee in paragraph 6 of its report. The Fifth Committee adopted the draft resolution entitled "Financing of the United Nations Civilian Police

Mission in Haiti" without a vote. May I consider that the Assembly wishes to do likewise?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 55/269).

The Acting President: We have thus concluded this stage of our consideration of agenda item 150.

Agenda item 152

Financing of the United Nations Mission in the Central African Republic

Report of the Fifth Committee (A/55/960)

The Acting President: The Assembly will now take a decision on the draft resolution recommended by the Fifth Committee in paragraph 6 of its report. The Fifth Committee adopted the draft resolution without a vote. May I consider that the Assembly wishes to do likewise?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 55/270).

The Acting President: We have thus concluded this stage of our consideration of agenda item 152.

Agenda item 153 (*continued*)

Administrative and budgetary aspects of the financing of the United Nations peacekeeping operations

(a) Financing of the United Nations peacekeeping operations

Report of the Fifth Committee (A/55/534/Add.2)

The Acting President: The Assembly will now take a decision on four draft resolutions recommended by the Fifth Committee in paragraph 19 of its report and on two draft decisions recommended by the Committee in paragraph 20 of the same report.

We turn first to the four draft resolutions.

The Fifth Committee adopted draft resolution I, entitled "Support account for peacekeeping operations", without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

Draft resolution I was adopted (resolution 55/271).

The Acting President: The Fifth Committee adopted draft resolution II, entitled "Financing of the United Nations Logistics Base at Brindisi, Italy", without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do likewise?

Draft resolution II was adopted (resolution 55/272).

The Acting President: The Fifth Committee adopted draft resolution III, entitled "Experiences learned from the use of resident auditors at peacekeeping missions", without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

Draft resolution III was adopted (resolution 55/273).

The Acting President: The Fifth Committee adopted draft resolution IV, entitled "Reformed procedures for determining reimbursement to Member States for contingent-owned equipment and troop costs", without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do the same?

Draft resolution IV was adopted (resolution 55/274).

The Acting President: We turn next to the two draft decisions.

Draft decision I is entitled "Reports of the Office of Internal Oversight Services". The Fifth Committee adopted draft decision I without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do likewise?

Draft decision I was adopted.

The Acting President: Draft decision II is entitled "Death and disability benefits". The Fifth Committee adopted draft decision II without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do likewise?

Draft decision II was adopted.

The Acting President: We have thus concluded this stage of our consideration of sub-item (a) of agenda item 153.

Agenda item 167

Financing of the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo

Report of the Fifth Committee (A/55/962)

The Acting President: The Assembly will now take a decision on the draft resolution recommended by the Fifth Committee in paragraph 6 of its report. The Fifth Committee adopted the draft resolution without a vote. May I take it that the Assembly wishes to do likewise?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 55/275).

The Acting President: We have thus concluded this stage of our consideration of agenda item 167.

Agenda item 169 (*continued*)

Scale of assessments for the apportionment of the expenses of the United Nations peacekeeping operations

Report of the Fifth Committee (A/55/712/Add.1)

The Acting President: May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to take note of the report of the Fifth Committee contained in document A/55/712/Add.1?

It was so decided.

The Acting President: We have thus concluded this stage of our consideration of agenda item 169.

Agenda item 176 (*continued*)

Financing of the United Nations Mission in Ethiopia and Eritrea

Report of the Fifth Committee (A/55/711/Add.2)

The Acting President: The Assembly will now take a decision on the draft resolution recommended by the Fifth Committee in paragraph 6 of its report.

The Fifth Committee adopted the draft resolution without a vote. May I consider that the Assembly wishes to do likewise?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 55/252 B).

The Acting President: We have thus concluded this stage of our consideration of agenda item 176.

The meeting rose at 4.55 p.m.

United Nations A/55/PV.104

General Assembly
Fifty-fifth session

Official Records

104th plenary meeting
Friday, 22 June 2001, 3 p.m.
New York

President: Mr. Holkeri ..... (Finland)

In the absence of the President, Mr. Shihab (Maldives), Vice-President, took the Chair.

The meeting was called to order at 3.40 p.m.

Agenda item 8 (*continued*)

Adoption of the agenda and organization of work: request for the inclusion of an additional item

Sixth report of the General Committee (A/55/250/Add.5)

The Acting President: I would like to draw the attention of the representatives to the sixth report of the General Committee, document A/55/250/Add.5, concerning a request by Nigeria for the inclusion in the agenda of an additional item.

In the report the General Committee decided to recommend to the General Assembly that an additional item, entitled "Appointment of the Secretary-General of the United Nations", should be included in the agenda of the current session.

May I take it that the General Assembly decides to include in the agenda of the current session this additional item?

It was so decided.

The Acting President: The General Committee further decided to recommend that the additional item should be considered directly in plenary meeting.

May I take it that the General Assembly decides to consider this item directly in the plenary meeting?

It was so decided.

Agenda item 42 (*continued*)

Special session of the General Assembly in 2001 for follow-up to the World Summit for Children

Draft resolution (A/55/L.85)

The Acting President: The draft resolution before the Assembly was recommended for adoption by the Preparatory Committee for the Special Session of the General Assembly on Children.

We shall now proceed to consider draft resolution A/55/L.85.

The Assembly will now take a decision on draft resolution A/55/L.85, entitled "Organizational arrangements for the round tables for the special session of the General Assembly on children".

May I take it that the Assembly decides to adopt draft resolution A/55/L.85?

Draft resolution A/55/L.85 was adopted (resolution 55/276).

The Acting President: The General Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda item 42.

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the interpretation of speeches delivered in the other languages. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room C-178. Corrections will be issued after the end of the session in a consolidated corrigendum.

01-42550 (E)

Agenda item 179 (*continued*)

Review of the problem of human immunodeficiency virus/acquired immunodeficiency syndrome in all its aspects

List of civil society organizations not in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council seeking accreditation to the special session of the General Assembly on HIV/AIDS, including in the preparatory process (HIV/AIDS/CRP.2/Add.2)

The Acting President: The General Assembly will now take action on several pending matters concerning the special session of the General Assembly on HIV/AIDS.

I first draw the attention of members to Conference Room Paper HIV/AIDS/CRP.2/Add.2, in English only.

Members will recall that the Assembly, at its 93rd plenary meeting, on 26 February 2001, and at its 100th plenary meeting, on 18 May 2001, had approved the complementary list of relevant civil society actors that do not hold consultative status with the Economic and Social Council nor are members of the Programme Coordinating Board of the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) seeking accreditation to the special session of the General Assembly on HIV/AIDS, as contained in documents HIV/AIDS/CRP.2 and its corrigendum 1 as well as addendum 1, all in English only.

Document HIV/AIDS/CRP.2/Add.2 contains the names of two organizations that complied with the deadline for accreditation but were inadvertently not included in the list.

The Assembly will now take a decision on the two organizations as contained in Conference Room Paper HIV/AIDS/CRP.2/Add.2 that do not hold consultative status with the Economic and Social Council nor are members of the Programme Coordination Board on HIV/AIDS seeking accreditation to the special session of the General Assembly on HIV/AIDS.

May I take it that the Assembly decides to approve the two organizations as contained in the Conference Room Paper HIV/AIDS/CRP.2/Add.2 that do not hold consultative status with the Economic and Social Council nor are members of the Programme Coordination Board on HIV/AIDS seeking accreditation to the special session of the General Assembly on HIV/AIDS?

It was so decided.

The Acting President: Next, I invite the attention of members to a matter relating to the list of selected accredited civil society actors for participation in the debate in plenary of the special session on HIV/AIDS and in the four round tables.

In paragraph 16 of General Assembly resolution 55/242 of 27 February 2001, the President of the General Assembly is requested, following appropriate consultations with Member States, to present the list of selected accredited civil society actors to Member States for consideration on a non-objection basis for final decision by the Assembly. The President is also requested to ensure that such selection is made on an equal and transparent basis, taking into account the principle of equitable geographical representation, relevant expertise and a wide variety of perspectives.

In paragraph 30 of General Assembly resolution 55/242, the President of the General Assembly is requested to conduct appropriate consultations with Member States and also with accredited civil society actors before presenting a list of selected accredited civil society actors that may participate in each round table to Member States for consideration on a non-objection basis for final decision by the General Assembly.

When selecting civil society actors, due consideration shall be given to the principles of equitable geographical representation and gender, as well as to an adequate mix of national, regional and international civil society actors to ensure that a variety of perspectives are represented.

In this connection, I wish to recall for members a letter dated 13 June 2001 from the President of the General Assembly to all Permanent Representatives to the United Nations presenting a list of civil society actors for participation in the debate of the plenary and in the round tables of the special session to Member States for accreditation on a non-objection basis for final decision by the General Assembly.

The UNAIDS secretariat has informed the office of the President of the following corrections to be

made to the list submitted by the President to Member States in his letter of 13 June 2001.

For the debate in plenary, the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies is an observer with the General Assembly and is one of the observers already accredited to make a statement in the plenary. Consequently, it should be deleted from the list.

As concerns round table No. 2, the Congressional Black Caucus was inadvertently placed on the list. It should be replaced by the San Francisco AIDS Foundation. Africa Action was previously known as the Africa Fund. The organization adopted its current name on 26 February 2001.

As for round table No. 3, Eskom and Unilever PLC should be replaced by the Global Business Council on HIV/AIDS.

I should like to inform Member States that all of the replacement organizations are duly accredited to the special session. If there is no objection, may I take it that the General Assembly takes note of these corrections?

It was so decided.

Action on the list of selected civil society actors for participation in the debate in plenary

The Acting President: We will now proceed to take action on the list, as orally corrected and as revised by the President's letter dated 21 June 2001.

List of accredited civil society actors to participate in the debate in the plenary

The Acting President: I will now read out the list of selected, accredited civil society actors for participation in the debate in plenary and in the round tables: International Community of Women Living with HIV/AIDS; International Centre for Research on Women; Global Network of People Living with HIV/AIDS; Global Business Council on HIV/AIDS; Inter-Parliamentary Council of the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU); Commission of the Churches on International Affairs of the World Council of Churches; International AIDS Society; International Council of AIDS Service Organizations. In round table 1: Global Network of People Living with HIV/AIDS; International AIDS Vaccine Initiative; Merck and Company, Incorporated; Malaysian AIDS Council; Latin American Harm Reduction Network; International AIDS Society; The Henry J. Kaiser Family Foundation; Médecins sans frontières. Round table 2: Asia Pacific Council of AIDS Service Organizations; Francois-Xavier Bagnoud Centre for Health and Human Rights; OASIS; San Francisco AIDS Foundation; AIDS Law Project; Lawyers' Collective HIV/AIDS Unit; Africa Action. Round table 3: ActionAID; Asian Forum of Parliamentarians on Population and Development; International Confederation of Free Trade Unions; Global Network of People Living with HIV/AIDS; Caritas Internationalis; Environment and Development Action in the Third World (Enda Tiers Monde); Global Business Council on HIV/AIDS. Round table 4: The AIDS Support Organization; International HIV/AIDS Alliance; Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation; Harvard AIDS Institute of Harvard University; Population Council; The Coca-Cola Company; African Services Committee; African Council of AIDS Service Organizations.

I now would like to give the floor to the representative of Canada.

Mr. Hynes (Canada): On the matter before us, my delegation would like to introduce a proposal on behalf of a number of other delegations. May I do that from my desk, or do I need to come to the podium?

The Acting President: From your desk.

Mr. Hynes (Canada): Thank you, Mr. President.

The Acting President: Egypt has asked for a point of order. I now give the floor to the representative of Egypt.

Mr. Roshdy (Egypt): We came here guided by today's *Journal*, which is telling us that there are two items on the agenda. The first of these items has already been adopted; the second one has also been adopted. So what is the procedure now? What are we discussing? And how can we discuss something that is not in the agenda and something about which the Member States were not informed in advance?

The Acting President: I see here in the *Journal* that we do have a second agenda item, which reads "Review of the problem of human immunodeficiency virus/acquired immunodeficiency syndrome in all its aspects". This is what we are discussing now.

Mr. Roshdy (Egypt): Yes, you are right, Sir, but the item continues. It says: "HIV/AIDS/CRP.2/Add.2". This is what we just adopted. Clearly, it says that we are discussing that which we just adopted. So what comes next?

The Acting President: Actually, what we are discussing now is the second agenda item listed in the *Journal*. The document that we had adopted was the one that you mentioned. The discussion of the second item is not finished.

I call on the representative of Egypt on a point of order.

Mr. Roshdy (Egypt): I am sorry to be prolonging this, but I still need a clarification as to why this reference to the document has appeared in the *Journal*, why the *Journal* is making a clear reference to a certain document. Usually, when we see a reference to a document, it means that we are invited to consider this document. This is not just, say, agenda item 179. This is not shown on the agenda. The agenda says item 179 and then makes a clear reference to a certain document under this item. This is what we are here to consider. It did not say just item 179.

The Acting President: As I said before, apparently we are discussing the second agenda item. Under that item we also have to make a final decision on this, according to resolution 55/242. There is no other time at which we can take a decision on this, because the special session will begin, as the Assembly knows, on Monday. So the list has to be approved today.

I call on the representative of Egypt on a point of order.

Mr. Roshdy (Egypt): I still believe that we have just approved the list. We approved one list, and the second, and we approved the addendum for this list. So I think that we have just approved the list.

The Acting President: We have just presented the list, and we have not yet taken a final decision on it.

I call on the representative of Canada on a point of order.

Mr. Hynes (Canada): Of course, my delegation and those for which I speak are in your hands, Sir, but the situation is straightforward from our perspective. We are dealing with the second item listed in the *Journal*. You, as President have put forward a proposal, and I now want to take the floor to propose a motion which would be tantamount to an amendment to that proposal. If I may do that I will proceed with my statement.

The Acting President: I call on the representative of the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya on a point of order.

Mr. Barg (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya) (*spoke in Arabic*): We have not yet settled the issue of what we are dealing with here in the General Assembly. We would like to support what was mentioned by the representative of Egypt. We were wondering what kind of decision we are going to take and relating to what issue. We have not been previously informed, either in today's *Journal* or elsewhere, that we are meeting here in the General Assembly to take a decision on an issue that is not mentioned in the *Journal*.

We are not here in informal/informals. We are in a formal meeting, taking a decision about which we have not been informed and the content of which we do not know. It is common practice for our delegations to get in touch with capitals to take a specific stand on any decision put forward for discussion in the General Assembly. Consequently, I do not think that there is any issue under discussion since delegations were not previous given notice of it. We do not even have time to prepare for the discussion of such a decision.

Everything is very clearly mentioned in today's *Journal*. This is why we object to our proceeding in this manner. The rules are very clear in this connection; normally this is what we do, and this is what we have been doing for many years.

Therefore, I reiterate my point. Of course we know that we are short of time, but this is a transient phenomenon, as it were, and we cannot as representatives take a stand on an issue for which we have not prepared ourselves and the content of which we do not really know. As I have just said, we are dealing with a serious issue, and our knowledge about it will not be transmitted to us by divine powers. This is what I have to say, and I may wish to take the floor again at a later stage.

The Acting President: With regard to what was just said by the representative of the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, as I said when we started discussing this agenda item, I mentioned a letter of the President of 21

June, which says that the list will be presented to Member States for consideration on a non-objection basis for final decision by the General Assembly, as in resolution 55/242. And this is the list which has been presented now. As the Assembly knows, the special session is starting just on Monday morning. I therefore appeal to the Assembly as follows: in order to approve this list we should try to continue with the discussion and arrive at a final decision on this list. Otherwise, for the very important special session we are having, starting on Monday, we may not be able to really fulfil the objectives that we are trying to reach at that session.

I give the floor to the representative of Qatar on a point of order.

Mr. Al-Sulaiti (Qatar) (*spoke in Arabic*): In accordance with rule 77 of our rules of procedure, my delegation would like to propose postponing discussion of the item before us until we get a written legal opinion from the legal services of the United Nations.

The Acting President: I give the floor to the representative of Sweden on a point of order.

Ms. Mårtensson (Sweden): On behalf of Sweden and the European Union, I have to say that the previous interventions are very confusing. I do fully agree that it would have been better if there had been more transparency and if there had been a notice in the *Journal* that we were going to take a decision on the list this afternoon. However, those delegations that claim they have not been informed were in fact informed yesterday by the Secretariat, and we discussed this issue even further today.

This issue is at the same time being mixed with the issue of whether or not we have actually adopted a list, but that is a completely different matter. As you stated, Sir, we have not adopted it yet. We were just at the point where you started to introduce that list. Another point is that Canada was on the way to making a motion, and according to the rules of procedure, any member of the General Assembly may do so if they so wish. I also wanted to ask about the very last point; I do not understand the request for a legal opinion. Perhaps it would simplify matters for the Office of Legal Affairs if we knew what the question was. So far, I have heard several different questions that point in completely different directions. Perhaps, Mr. President, you could guide us through this process.

The Acting President: Rule 76 says,

> "During the discussion of any matter, a representative may move the suspension or the adjournment of the meeting. Such motions shall not be debated but shall be immediately put to the vote. The President may limit the time to be allowed to the speaker moving the suspension or adjournment of the meeting."

If there is no objection, I intend to suspend the meeting.

I would like to bring to the attention of the whole Assembly that we are now taking up all matters which come under a point of order.

I call on the representative of Canada on a point of order.

Mr. Hynes (Canada): I very much regret having to engage in this procedural discussion. I am looking forward to an opportunity to simply say my peace, and then enable the Assembly to proceed with its important business so that we do not have to deal with this very important question on Monday morning in the presence of our ministers, heads of Government and heads of State. I think that would be a very unbecoming start to the special session.

My point of order relates to the initial intervention on the part of Egypt, questioning what we are talking about. You clarified very well, Sir, that we are dealing with the second agenda item listed in the *Journal* today, on the review of the HIV/AIDS issue, and you made it clear that you had put a proposal before the Assembly under that item. The interventions I have heard at this point —

The Acting President: I am sorry. We can talk only about the suspension now.

Mr. Hynes (Canada): I just wish to note that there is a prior procedural issue on the table, and that is a challenge by the delegations of Egypt and others to your initial ruling that we are dealing with legitimate General Assembly business. Challenges to the rulings of the Chair, pursuant to rule 71, are to be put to an immediate vote. We are prepared to vote either on the challenge or on the suspension, and we oppose the suspension at this point because we do not have time. However, what we do think we are dealing with here is a challenge to the ruling of the Acting President.

The Acting President: I give the floor to the representative of Egypt on a point of order.

Mr. Roshdy (Egypt): I am sorry I have to draw your attention to rule 71 of the rules of procedure, which states, "A representative rising to a point of order may not speak on the substance of the matter under discussion." We have just heard a discussion of the substance.

The Acting President: I give the floor to the representative of Canada on a point of order.

Mr. Hynes (Canada): I and the delegations on whose behalf I am speaking want to be of every possible assistance to you, Sir, in resolving this matter. So, we are prepared to go along with your suggestion of suspension right now so that we can try to sort it out.

The meeting was suspended at 4.20 p.m. and resumed at 6.10 p.m.

The Acting President: We will proceed now with the agenda item we were discussing when we suspended the meeting.

I give the floor to the representative of Canada.

Mr. Hynes (Canada): I am speaking on behalf of the delegations of Canada and Norway. The following delegations have also associated themselves with this intervention: Andorra, Australia, Chile, Iceland, Liechtenstein, New Zealand and San Marino.

I would like at this stage to propose an amendment to the proposal which you, Sir, had orally read out to the Assembly before we took this break. This is a course of action which my delegation and others had signalled we would be raising during the informal consultations chaired this morning by the President's facilitator, Ambassador Ka.

Just as a bit of background, I would refer to the two letters from the President of the General Assembly to all delegations on the matter before us. You have already referred to those. In the first instance, on 13 June, he proposed a list of civil society actors to participate in the plenary and in the round-table discussions during the special session. In the second instance, only yesterday, 21 June, the President advised delegations that he had been informed by 11 delegations of objections to the participation in the round table on human rights of a representative of the International Gay and Lesbian Human Rights Commission.

After lengthy informal discussions this morning, it became apparent that the office of the President is not in a position to divulge the identities of the objecting delegations; nor is it able to enlighten the Assembly as to the nature or the basis of those objections. Nor, it seems, were any of the objecting delegations able — or willing — to share any such information with other members of the Assembly.

In those circumstances, our delegations consider that they do not have sufficient information to enable them to make an informed decision to exclude that representative from the list of civil society actors who would participate in the human rights round table. In that regard, we would note that the organization in question had already been duly accredited to the special session by an earlier decision of the Assembly, and we would add that the only basis on which my delegation could agree to its exclusion from the list would be the presentation of clear evidence to the effect that that organization had engaged in activities contrary to the fundamental purposes and principles of the United Nations. At this stage, no such evidence has been adduced — and, indeed, no such allegations have even been advanced.

Consequently, our delegations would now wish to formally move that the name of Karyn Kaplan of the International Gay and Lesbian Human Rights Commission be included in the list of civil society actors to participate in the round table on human rights during the special session.

I want to emphasize very strongly that our delegations regret very much that it has become necessary to take this measure, and we have proceeded only following very thorough reflection and only after having reached the conclusion that at least two considerations dictate this course of action.

First, throughout the preparatory process, in discussions on both procedural and substantive aspects of our work, it has been frequently and widely stated, and agreed by all, that this special session can succeed and the battle against HIV/AIDS can be effective only if a genuine effort is made to engage the relevant quarters of civil society in the process and in the battle. If we wish the world to regard the special session as a serious effort to contribute to this cause, our actions here today must reflect those words and that reality.

Secondly, the time when it might have been considered acceptable for groups or organizations to

deny important rights or privileges to people on the basis of anonymous arbitrary blackballing is, happily, a long-gone era in our respective societies. Furthermore, our delegations have never considered that such practices are appropriate in the context of the United Nations.

Consequently, we request that our motion for the reinstatement of this group now be taken up by the Assembly, and we would urge all other delegations to join in taking this step to preserve the integrity of the special session and of the Assembly. We would request further that this motion be considered through a recorded vote. We would assume that, following a decision on that motion, the Assembly would be in a position to take a decision on the entire list that the Acting President has read out.

Mr. Roshdy (Egypt): Guided by rule 67 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly, I humbly appeal to the Acting President to check whether we have a quorum sufficient for the Assembly to take any action.

The Acting President: In order to ascertain the presence of delegations in the Hall, I would request all delegations that are here to press the green button on their desks.

The total is 86 delegations, 9 short of a quorum.

I call on the representative of Canada on a point of order.

Mr. Hynes (Canada): My delegation was quite prepared to concur with the proposed method of counting in the interest of efficiency, but I would request that the quorum be counted by a headcount, because I observed some delegations that were in the Hall but that did not press the button. Thus, I do not think that the electronic count is an accurate reflection of the number of delegations present.

The Acting President: I call on the representative of Egypt.

Mr. Roshdy (Egypt): I think it is unheard of to have a headcount. If a delegation is present in the Hall and does not wish to press the button, it means that that delegation does not want its presence to be acknowledged. It is up to a representative whether or not to push the button. If I do not push the button, it means that I do not want to participate in this process, so I am not present. I am afraid I will have to ask the Secretariat not to make any connotations while I am making my intervention — otherwise, this would be a very dangerous precedent.

The Acting President: In the light of the comment made by Egypt, I would like to ask the delegation of Canada whether it is making a formal request for a headcount.

Mr. Hynes (Canada): I am in the hands of the Acting President, but I do not know if I have any option, frankly, because the second sentence of rule 67 states clearly that the presence of a majority of the members shall be required for any decision to be taken, not that a majority of members must push the button. I have observed that there are some delegations that are present and that did not push the button. I will be happy to have those delegations abstain on my amendment in due course. But if they are here, then they need to be counted as part of the quorum.

The Acting President: I call on the representative of Egypt on a point of order.

Mr. Roshdy (Egypt): Because a headcount is of course unheard of, may I ask the representative of Canada, through the Acting President, if it would be by hand or by call. If, for example, the President calls on Egypt, and we are present, and neither I nor my colleagues say we are present and we just maintain silence, does this mean that we are present or does this mean that we are absent? If this is the will of the Member States, in my interpretation we would be absent, because we can just simply move out of this Hall and come back 15 minutes after the count. So there is no quorum.

Mr. Chaudhry (Pakistan): We are indeed disappointed that we have begun in the first place to consider an item that was not on our agenda. As is clearly evident, the *Journal* does not show it, and we had to spend three hours discussing it. We could not even benefit from the legal advice. I do not know what the legal department is for if it cannot really guide us in such matters.

Procedures are being violated one after another. We began consideration of an item on which there was a clear dispute, and now we are being subjected to innovative ways of counting. One is reminded of the Florida recount. It is really getting outrageous. If this continues, if the procedures are not to be respected, I guess there will be many delegations that will have to

disassociate themselves from this process and will have to go out, as Egypt proposed. We will probably have to go out, because otherwise the best course is to stay and follow the procedures, not to introduce new items and new situations.

The Acting President: I thank all the speakers who have just addressed the Assembly, and I ask that we be very rational. As Acting President, I am left at the disposal of the Assembly. Members are the Assembly. They decide what is to be done. But I am also advised by the legal department, and I am trying to do my best to conduct this meeting in a legal way that has precedents. I am trying not to create any new incidents. Please bear with me. This time I would like again to really suspend the meeting for five minutes.

The meeting was suspended at 6.25 p.m. and resumed at 6.50 p.m.

The Acting President: According to rule 67, since there is no quorum for a decision, but there is a quorum for the discussion of the agenda item before us, if there are any representatives who wish to make statements, we will continue with the 104th plenary meeting.

I call on the representative of Egypt on a point of order.

Mr. Roshdy (Egypt): I should simply like to ask for a clarification. May I know what your proposal is?

The Acting President: My proposal is to continue with the meeting and to allow those countries that wish to make statements to do so, but not to take action on any decision, because there is no quorum for it.

Ms. Mårtensson (Sweden): Sir, the procedure is somewhat confused, but I would like to take this opportunity, since you invited us to make statements, to make a statement on behalf of the European Union (EU), the Czech Republic, Cyprus, Hungary, Lithuania, Malta, Romania and Slovenia.

The main point of our intervention is that we would like support the motion made by Canada. We think it is very important that we take a decision whereby we would include the International Gay and Lesbian Human Rights Commission, which has been removed from the list that was previously presented by the President of the General Assembly. We heard the reason for the removal in a letter from the President of the General Assembly dated 21 June. The reason given was that 11 Member States had objected to that group's participation.

All members of the General Assembly have previously stressed, in resolution 55/13 and elsewhere, the importance of the contribution of civil society actors in the response to the epidemic, and the need for their active involvement in the special session. On this basis, and based on the particular experience of the organization in question, the International Gay and Lesbian Human Rights Commission was accredited by the General Assembly so that it could participate in both the preparatory activities and the special session. After consultations with the Member States and accredited civil society actors, and based on the criteria given in resolution 55/242 — to which you previously referred, Sir — the President of the General Assembly made his recommendation on the participation of civil society actors in the debate in the plenary and the four round tables. Due to the objection of 11 anonymous Member States, that organization was, however, removed from the list.

We would like to state that the EU and the others that have supported this statement cannot accept this type of procedure, whereby organizations are not allowed to speak, to make their voices heard, to add their points of view. We feel even more strongly about this position after hearing what we have heard today. We are very, very disturbed by this opposition to freedom of expression that has been expressed here today.

Until now the General Assembly has not been provided with any information that would lead us to question our opinion that this organization would have the relevant expertise to make a valuable contribution to round table 2. In the informal consultations that preceded this meeting, we appealed in vain to the representatives of those delegations that had objected to that organization's participation to come forward and provide us with information regarding the basis of their objections.

Therefore, we have no choice but to support the motion by Canada to take a decision to add this organization to the list. Unfortunately, as it is quite clear that we are not in a position to achieve a consensus decision, we also support the idea of taking the decision by recorded vote.

Mr. Chaudhry (Pakistan): At the outset, I must say that my delegation, like many other delegations, attaches great importance to the success of this special session. We are committed to its success, and we want to work together for its success.

Mr. Barg (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya): I should sincerely and from the bottom of my heart apologize to my dear colleague and brother from Pakistan for interrupting him.

We would like a very clear clarification. Are we discussing the substance of a proposal that has not been put to a vote? If we are doing this, my second point is that any proposal of a substantive nature has to be put to the General Assembly in writing and time has to be given — 24 hours, according to the rules — for Member States to study the proposal and act upon it. My delegation cannot go along with the idea of discussing proposals that have not been either acted upon or circulated. Therefore, this discussion is really useless. And my delegation opposes this kind of discussion on the merits of a proposal that we vaguely heard about just now.

The Acting President: Rule 78 reads,

> "Proposals and amendments shall normally be submitted in writing to the Secretary-General, who shall circulate copies to the delegations."

I have been told that there have been incidents in which this procedure has not been strictly followed; as a general rule this procedure has been followed. I should say that as a general rule it says that we shall not proceed if there are any objections.

Mr. Barg (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya): I am sorry to take the floor again, but as I have said and will repeat, this is what the Secretariat has been advising us about exceptions; exceptions are not the rule. Secondly, exceptions do not pertain to questions of a substantive nature. This is a very substantive question, and it has to be treated as such.

The Acting President: Should I understand this to be an objection?

Mr. Barg (Libyan Arab Jamahiriya): Yes.

The Acting President: We are on the issue of the objection of the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya.

Mr. Hynes (Canada): I do regret that we are back into these procedural discussions. I thought that you, Sir, had wanted to give delegations a chance to comment on the substance of the questions before us. But I would require clarification as to the precise nature of the objection from the representative of the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya. If he is objecting to the Assembly's taking action on proposals that have not been presented in writing 24 hours in advance, then that objection would have to pertain to the proposed course of action, the proposed list that you read to us this afternoon, as well as to the Canadian amendment, of course. If we are going to proceed on that basis, my delegation will be more than prepared to submit a written text for consideration in due course. I assume that would be Monday morning, in the presence of our ministers and dignitaries.

The Acting President: As I have stated before, there is not even a quorum to decide on anything. Therefore, I will adjourn this meeting. The next meeting will be announced in the *Journal*.

The meeting rose at 7.05 p.m.

United Nations A/55/PV.105

General Assembly

Fifty-fifth session

Official Records

105th plenary meeting
Friday, 29 June 2001, 10.05 a.m.
New York

President: Mr. Holkeri ..... (Finland)

The meeting was called to order at 10.05 a.m.

Agenda item 187

Appointment of the Secretary-General of the United Nations

Letter from the President of the Security Council to the President of the General Assembly (A/55/999)

Draft resolution (A/55/L.87)

The President: The Assembly has before it document A/55/999, containing a letter dated 27 June 2001 from the President of the Security Council to the President of the General Assembly. That letter reads as follows:

> "I have the honour to inform you that the Security Council, at its 4337th meeting, held in private on 27 June 2001, adopted by acclamation resolution 1358 (2001) concerning the appointment of the Secretary-General of the United Nations. The resolution reads as follows:
>
> "'The Security Council,
>
> "'*Having considered* the question of the recommendation for the appointment of the Secretary-General of the United Nations,
>
> "'*Recommends* to the General Assembly that Mr. Kofi Annan be appointed Secretary-General of the United Nations for a second term of office from 1 January 2002 to 31 December 2006.'
>
> "(*Signed*) Anwarul Karim Chowdhury
> "President of the Security Council".

In connection with the recommendation of the Security Council, the General Assembly has before it a draft resolution submitted in document A/55/L.87 by Bangladesh, China, Colombia, France, Ireland, Jamaica, Mali, Mauritius, Norway, the Russian Federation, Singapore, Tunisia, Ukraine, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland and the United States of America. That is the only document before the Assembly on which action is required.

I give the floor to the representative of Bangladesh, Mr. Anwarul Karim Chowdhury, who is also the President of the Security Council, to introduce draft resolution A/55/L.87.

Mr. Chowdhury (Bangladesh): It is an honour and privilege for me, in my capacity as the President of the Security Council, to address the General Assembly in order to convey to it the recommendation of the Security Council for the appointment of the Secretary-General of the United Nations.

As the President indicated just now, at its 4337th meeting, held in private on 27 June, the Security Council adopted by acclamation resolution 1358 (2001), whereby it recommended to the General

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the interpretation of speeches delivered in the other languages. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room C-178. Corrections will be issued after the end of the session in a consolidated corrigendum.

01-43168 (E)

Assembly that Mr. Kofi Annan be appointed Secretary-General of the United Nations for a second term of office, from 1 January 2002 to 31 December 2006. As the President of the Security Council, I have conveyed that recommendation to you, Mr. President, in my letter of 27 June 2001, which is before representatives as document A/55/999. You have also made a reference to this document, Mr. President.

I now have the pleasure to introduce, on behalf of China, Colombia, France, Ireland, Jamaica, Mali, Mauritius, Norway, the Russian Federation, Singapore, Tunisia, Ukraine, the United Kingdom, the United States and my own country, Bangladesh, the draft resolution contained in document A/55/L.87. It reads as follows:

"*The General Assembly,*

"*Having considered* the recommendation contained in Security Council resolution 1358 (2001),

"*Expressing its appreciation* for the effective and dedicated service rendered to the United Nations by Mr. Kofi Annan, Secretary-General of the United Nations, during his first term of office,

"*Appoints* Mr. Kofi Annan for a second term of office beginning on 1 January 2002 and ending on 31 December 2006."

In presenting this draft resolution to the General Assembly, I recall the words of the President of the Security Council uttered in this Hall five years ago, as the Assembly was about to adopt the resolution appointing Mr. Annan as the Secretary-General of the United Nations. Recalling his over 30 years of dedication to the multifaceted tasks that the United Nations performs, it was said that there was no doubt that Secretary-General Annan would meet and exceed all expectations and carry out his duties in the most impeccable, impartial and independent way.

Secretary-General Annan has lived up to those words. He has excelled in his office, delivering under trying circumstances. His efforts to reform the United Nations have made the Organization ready for the challenges of the twenty-first century. He has made the United Nations more relevant in today's world, broadening its support base by developing partnerships with civil society and the private sector, in particular. His vision in making real the Charter commitment made in the name of "We the peoples" was reflected in the success of the Millennium Summit. His strong support for international development goals, particularly for Africa and the least developed countries, has positively impacted on the lives of people all over the world.

From one conflict situation to another, he made a difference by advocating reason and hope and promoting the culture of peace and non-violence, often in the midst of hostilities and despair. He made United Nations peacekeeping more relevant and more respectable, enhancing its effectiveness in bringing peace to suffering millions. We have no doubt that he will only increase and intensify his efforts to serve the cause of the United Nations and of its peoples during his second term. We wish him the very best, and assure him of our wholehearted support.

I would recommend that the General Assembly adopt draft resolution A/55/L.87, now before it, by acclamation.

The President: The President of the Security Council has just proposed that the draft resolution contained in document A/55/L.87 be adopted unanimously.

May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to adopt draft resolution A/55/L.87 by acclamation?

The draft resolution was adopted (resolution 55/277).

The President: I have the honour to announce that His Excellency Mr. Kofi Annan has been appointed Secretary-General of the United Nations by acclamation for a second term of office, beginning on 1 January 2002 and ending on 31 December 2006.

I request the Chief of Protocol to escort the Secretary-General, Mr. Kofi Annan, into the General Assembly Hall.

The Chief of Protocol escorted the Secretary-General, Mr. Kofi Annan, into the General Assembly Hall.

The President: I have the honour to inform you officially, Sir, that the General Assembly has appointed you Secretary-General of the United Nations for a second term of office, beginning 1 January 2002 and ending on 31 December 2006.

I now invite His Excellency Mr. Kofi Annan to make a statement.

The Secretary-General: I am deeply honoured by the decision you have just taken. Let me thank the President of the Security Council — my good friend, Ambassador Anwarul Karim Chowdhury — for proposing my reappointment, and to thank all of you for the great honour you have done me.

When your predecessors re-appointed Dag Hammarskjöld to a second term, in 1957, he said that no one could accept the position of Secretary-General of the United Nations "knowing what it means", except from a sense of duty. He immediately added, however, that no one could serve in that capacity

> "without a sense of gratitude for a task as deeply rewarding as it is exacting; as perennially inspiring as, sometimes, it may seem discouraging".

After four and a half years in the job, I can only echo both halves of his statement.

I labour under a constant sense of obligation to you, the Members of the Organization; to all the world's peoples, whom you represent; and in particular to my fellow Africans, whom you have honoured in my person today. But at the same time I am sustained by a profound feeling of gratitude for the confidence you have placed in me, and for the encouragement and support I have received from so many quarters. I am well aware that, on my own, I could never have won that confidence or earned that support.

Wherever I have travelled in these past four years, and whatever issues I have tackled, I have been inspired by the sacrifices that the staff of the United Nations make, every day, on behalf of the peoples we serve. In peacekeeping operations, in refugee camps and in countless other missions of mercy and of hope, their dedication to the service of mankind is constant and unswerving. Whatever I have achieved, I owe it to their commitment and support, both in the field and at Headquarters.

It has been my privilege to serve as Secretary-General at a time of sweeping change and great challenges. My aims, I hope, have been clear.

I have sought to equip this indispensable institution so that it can adjust to change, rise to new challenges and serve its Member States and their peoples more effectively, while remaining true to the principles of the Charter.

I have sought to turn an unflinching eye on the failures of our recent past, in order to assess more clearly what it will take for us to succeed in the future.

I have sought to speak out in defence of those who cannot speak for themselves — for the right of the poorest to development, and the right of the weakest and most vulnerable to protection.

And I have sought to make universal human rights the touchstone of my work, in all their aspects, because I believe they belong to every faith, every culture and every people.

Whether, or how far, I have succeeded in these aims is not for me to judge. I do know, however, that the task is far from done.

Just this week, we have taken the measure of one particular challenge, which 20 years ago we could not have imagined: the global scourge of HIV/AIDS. As the Assembly knows, I have made that issue a personal priority, and I am now convinced that the battle can be won. Thanks to this week's work, and the long months of preparation that preceded it, we at last have an agreed, comprehensive strategy. Now we must put it into action.

There are many other challenges, but I do not need to list them now. The heads of State and Government of Members have given us our marching orders in the Millennium Declaration they adopted last September. And next September, at the start of the fifty-sixth session, I will put before the Assembly a programme for carrying out those orders over the next five years.

For now, let me simply renew my oath of office:

I solemnly swear to exercise in all loyalty, discretion and conscience the functions entrusted to me as Secretary-General of the United Nations, to discharge these functions and regulate my conduct with the interests of the United Nations only in view, and not to seek or accept instructions in regard to the performance of my duties from any Government or other authority external to the Organization.

Let me add the hope that five years from now the peoples of the world whom this Organization was founded to serve will feel that it is closer to them,

working better to fulfil their needs and putting their individual welfare at the centre of everything it does.

Only if their confidence in the United Nations has been strengthened will your confidence in me have been justified.

The President: I thank the Secretary-General, His Excellency Mr. Kofi Annan, for his statement.

In my capacity as President of the General Assembly, it is an honour and my personal pleasure to warmly congratulate you, Mr. Secretary-General, on your reappointment. The membership has demonstrated its strong support for and trust in your second term in office, especially by taking such a timely decision on this matter. This decision by Member States is a clear testimony of continued support for your ideas and actions. We, the Members of the United Nations, would like to thank you for accepting these responsibilities and duties for the second time.

Last September, at the Millennium Summit, Member States committed themselves to ambitious principles and targets, such as halving poverty by 2015. In order to reach these goals, this Organization needs leadership with vision and wisdom. There is a sense of urgency to implement the millennium goals. Your continued commitment to an effectively functioning Organization with a new management culture, which I salute, is one of the keys to success. In the Millennium Declaration, we have recognized our individual and shared responsibility to implement these goals at the national level.

The United Nations must also become more relevant to the world outside. We have happily noted your initiatives in this regard to build partnerships with other actors at the national and international level.

I should like to assure you, Mr. Secretary-General, of the support of Member States as you guide this Organization during the next five years. I also wish to say that having been able to work with you has been a privilege and a pleasure. Please accept my personal wishes of good health and good luck to you and your family.

I now give the floor to the representative of Nigeria, His Excellency Mr. Arthur C.I. Mbanefo, who will speak on behalf of the African States.

Mr. Mbanefo (Nigeria): I feel particularly proud and privileged to speak today on behalf of the African Group.

We have today unanimously re-elected the Secretary-General, Mr. Kofi Annan, for another term of five years to run from 1 January 2002 to 31 December 2006. We have done so mindful of the qualities we all expect of the Secretary-General of our Organization and the quintessential credentials of Mr. Kofi Annan, for which we honour him by requesting of him another term in office. The task performed by the Secretary-General is not an easy one, and our expectations of him are simply awesome. His high responsibility is to exercise the highest integrity, fidelity to his oath of office and loyalty to the United Nations Organization.

We are all familiar with the contributions this astute, distinguished diplomat and consummate international civil servant has, in his charismatic manner, made to our Organization, which have compelled all of us to act as we have done today. We look forward to continued support for him by all Member States as he strives for excellence in the service of our Organization.

No one can talk about the Secretary-General, Mr. Kofi Annan, without mentioning some of the innovative ideas he has brought to the United Nations, such as the Millennium Summit with its Outcome Document, the Global Compact, the Brahimi Panel report on peacekeeping operations, the establishment of the global fund to fight AIDS, and the establishment of Tribunals to fight impunity and crimes against humanity, as in Yugoslavia and Rwanda.

I recognize and salute the presence of Mrs. Nane Annan, who has supported the Secretary-General through these past arduous years, ensuring that he gave nothing but his best in the service of our Organization. We know that it is a huge sacrifice that you and your family are making for humanity, because without your support the Secretary-General would not have been available to serve us, particularly with such distinction.

We in the African Group are proud of this great son of Africa, who indeed has made a tremendous difference in that coveted high post of Secretary-General of the United Nations. This is why we solidly, unwaveringly and immensely supported and openly campaigned for his re-election. We salute you and look forward to a second term that will witness much greater strides in your service to our Organization. Stoutly, we

shall walk side by side to ensure your continued success.

At this point, I wish on behalf of our Group to thank the various regional groups for their unflinching support of this re-election. The same goes to all the members of the Security Council, permanent and non-permanent alike. This unique act of solidarity and support for a vision to move our Organization forward in the new millennium is commendable.

Mr. Secretary-General, the world today looks to you, as always, with renewed hope that, calling upon your most unique qualities which have so eloquently recommended you for a second term, you will excel at tackling the difficult and complex issues facing our world. We are confident that you will lead our Organization towards ensuring that we carry out fully our leaders' injunctions contained in the Millennium Declaration, as well as observe and guard the principles enshrined in the United Nations Charter. This we believe and trust you will do, as these hopes remain alive.

The United Nations is, in the final analysis, what Member States want it to be. It is of cardinal importance, therefore, that Member States continue to provide the fullest support and commensurate resources to the Secretary-General during his second term to enable the United Nations to play the role envisaged for it in world affairs.

The President: I give the floor to the representative of Oman, Mr. Fuad Mubarak Al-Hinai, on behalf of the Group of Asian States.

Mr. Al-Hinai (Oman): On this historic day, I am grateful for the honour bestowed upon me as Chairman of the Group of Asian States to express our congratulations to the Secretary-General of the United Nations, Mr. Kofi Annan, on his reappointment.

The Member States of the Asian Group have unwaveringly favoured the enhancement of United Nations activities on the basis of its Charter, and in this regard they recognize the role of the Secretary-General in implementing the purposes and principles of the Charter.

A little less than five years ago, the world community decided to put its trust in you, Mr. Secretary-General, as the Chief Administrative Officer of this Organization, to lead and guide us through good and sometimes difficult times, to dedicate yourself to the cause of peace and justice, to devote yourself to upholding the interests of this Organization and its entire membership — big and small, strong and weak, rich and poor — and to implement the purposes and principles of the United Nations Charter, but above all to maintain the Organization's credibility and independence. You have not disappointed us.

Today we reaffirm our trust in you by re-appointing you as Secretary-General to lead us for the next five years. We unanimously welcome the recommendation by the Security Council and the decision of the General Assembly. You will bring with you to your second term a wealth of experience in dealing with multilateral issues, preventive diplomacy, good leadership and excellent negotiating skills. You have never shied away from taking bold decisions at times of crisis when you felt that your intervention would help to defuse tensions, as we have witnessed when you have undertaken your diplomatic missions to different regions of the world.

Your vision for the twenty-first century, as reflected in your report "We the Peoples", formed the basis for the Millennium Declaration. It served as a timely guide as we embarked on our efforts to reinvigorate the role of the Organization and of its affiliated agencies and to cope with the requirements of this century in order to meet the needs of nations and the aspirations of their peoples.

We, the Member States of the Asian Group, representing more than half of the world's population, rejoice in your re-appointment and are convinced that, given your integrity, dedication, fairness and impartiality, you will continue to be devoted to upholding the interests of this Organization.

In conclusion, allow me, on behalf of the Asian Group, to express to you, Mr. Secretary-General, our readiness to continue our cooperation with you to achieve the noble goals and objectives enshrined in the United Nations Charter.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Mr. Husein Zivalj, on behalf of the Group of Eastern European States.

Mr. Zivalj (Bosnia and Herzegovina): It is my profound honour and privilege as Permanent Representative of Bosnia and Herzegovina and Chairman of the Group of Eastern European States to

address the General Assembly on behalf on the Group on this important occasion. It is also with great pleasure that we extend our warmest congratulations to Mr. Kofi Annan on his appointment to the post of Secretary-General of the United Nations for a second term. As we congratulate Mr. Annan on his re-election, we express our deepest appreciation for the achievements of his first term of office.

The Secretary-General has served the United Nations at a critical period coinciding with the turn of the century, at a time characterized by the crucial challenges of a globalizing world, by tremendous opportunities and grave risks for humankind. His efforts to preserve international peace and security, to ensure sustainable development, to protect the environment and to promote human rights and social justice in a safer world deserve the highest marks from the international community.

We would be remiss in not recognizing also Mr. Kofi Annan's personal contributions to the successful holding last year of the historic Millennium Summit at the United Nations, a momentous event which has charted a road map for the world Organization for decades to come.

On behalf of the Group of Eastern European States, I would like to convey to Mr. Kofi Annan our best wishes for his tenure as Secretary-General of the United Nations for the next five years. The Group of Eastern European States pledges its support and cooperation to him in carrying out his not always easy mandate in the best interests of humanity.

The President: I give the floor to the representative of El Salvador, His Excellency Mr. José Roberto Andino Salazar, who will speak on behalf of the Latin American and Caribbean States.

Mr. Andino Salazar: (El Salvador) (*spoke in Spanish*): On behalf of the Member States of the Latin America and Caribbean Group, I have the honour to express our warmest and sincerest congratulations to Mr. Kofi Annan on his re-election for a second term as Secretary-General of the United Nations starting 1 January 2002. As in the past, the activities of the Secretary-General will continue to unfold in a complex and difficult international environment of unresolved conflicts and shared concerns, in which new challenges and threats will emerge for the international community, running counter to the fundamental purposes and principles universally recognized and accepted by the international community. Those purposes and principles relate to maintaining harmony and guaranteeing the security, territorial integrity and political independence of the States, as well as to promoting peaceful solutions to disputes and friendly relations among nations, based on respect for the sovereign equality and self-determination of peoples. This will test not only the capacity and efficiency of the United Nations in collective security matters, but also the creativity, imagination and dynamism of the Secretary-General in reaching the objectives established in the Charter. Today, as they were 50 years ago, those objectives remain a valid, shared aspiration, especially for peoples marginalized from economic and social progress.

During his first term our Secretary-General has carried out energetic and wide-ranging activities to restore to the United Nations the prestige that it has gained with great efforts over its 50 years of existence, and to make it, as our former Secretary-General, Mr. Javier Pérez de Cuéllar said in December 1991, an Organization that has ceased to occupy a peripheral place and has become the very centre of world affairs, and whose credibility and high efficiency have been established beyond all doubt.

We believe that the efforts of the Secretary-General deserve our recognition, in particular those dedicated to the process of renovating and revitalizating the United Nations, the initiative to hold the Millennium Summit and the decision to study ways of improving the capacity and efficiency of peacekeeping operations. These initiatives have acquired greater legitimacy and obtained the support of all Member States, having been implemented within the Organization's framework of rules and having followed the fundamental principles that must characterize the work of the highest official of the Organization. Those principles spur him on in this direction, especially in strengthening the principles of impartiality and independence in his duties, in the face of attempts to influence him by any particular State or group of States.

This is why the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean have noted with satisfaction that the election of the Secretary-General for the term 2002-2005 has taken place in the greatest harmony and by acclamation on the part of all Member States, both in the Security Council and in the General Assembly.

We are certain that the Secretary-General will continue to carry out his duties with dedication and determination in order to complete the work on sensitive priority issues of general interest for the international community. We are certain that he will continue to propose new and innovative initiatives that will allow the consolidation of this world Organization as an irreplaceable and indispensable institution with a truly democratic character, with a precise, clear direction and with the capacity and adequate resources to confront the challenges of the new millennium in such a way that the United Nations will constitute a genuine instrument in the service of peoples, including the poorest nations on the planet.

We recognize that it is not easy to make rapid and substantive progress in the solution of global conflicts and problems, especially those involving sensitive political issues, strategic interests or the security of States. However, we believe that the capacity and experience of the Secretary-General will allow us to address the collective interests of humankind in accordance with the purposes and principles of the Charter, bearing in mind that any step in that direction, however small, will constitute a positive advance in the development of international relations.

In that regard it is important to highlight that States will continue to be the central actors in the activities of the Organization. Therefore, if we demand more effective work and concrete results from the United Nations system, we should also demonstrate the political will to adopt adequate measures that will help and support the Secretary-General in leading this world Organization successfully throughout his second five-year mandate, with no conditions other than the obligations and commitments established in the Charter and reaffirmed in the Millennium Declaration.

Consequently, we, the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean, offer to the Secretary-General our utmost cooperation in his difficult and complex tasks. This will allow us to progressively advance in the implementation of the objectives of the Charter, and thus to the realization of the aspiration of all people to live in dignity in a world that to this day has denied these rights to the great majority.

Finally, we would like to convey our appreciation for the interest that the Secretary-General has shown with regard to the problems of our region. We hope that over the next few years his efforts will lead to strengthened cooperation and assistance, in accordance with the particularities of each country and its circumstances and needs.

The President: I call on the representative of Spain, His Excellency Mr. Inocencio F. Arias, who will speak on behalf of the Group of Western European and other States.

Mr. Arias (Spain)(*spoke in Spanish*)**:** Occupying the presidency of the Group of Western European and other States brings with it the special honour today of warmly congratulating the Secretary-General on his re-election to a second term.

The unanimous support shown by the regional Groups reflects the recognition of the various qualities that have characterized Mr. Kofi Annan's work: first, his courage and determination in stressing the primacy of human rights, showing eloquently that no alibi can shelter the gross violation of these rights; secondly, his vision in advocating so firmly the urgency and seriousness of problems such as AIDS; thirdly, his honesty in recognizing the shortcomings of the Organization and pushing for its reform; fourthly, his enviable tact in dealing with de facto powers that affect the stability of the United Nations; fifthly, his handling of public relations, a vital skill for the United Nations in the twenty-first century; and, last but not least, his steadfast faith in the principles and potential of, and the need for, the United Nations.

Someone has said — it might have been the Secretary-General himself — that if the United Nations did not exist in this tormented world in which we live, with its poverty, injustice, conflict and disease, someone would have to invent it. The statement is true; and I would go as far as saying, on behalf of my Group, that if Mr. Kofi Annan did not exist today, *hic et nunc*, we would have to invent someone with similar political and personal characteristics.

The Western European and other States Group therefore will continue to give its full support to the admirable endeavours and efficient management of the Secretary-General.

I wish you, Mr. Secretary-General, every success over the next five years, and we hope that we will be here to see it.

The President: I call on the representative of Saudi Arabia, His Excellency Mr. Fawzi Bin Abdul

Majeed Shobokshi, who will speak on behalf of the Group of Arab States.

Mr. Shobokshi (Saudi Arabia)(*spoke in Arabic*): We appreciate the efforts of the Secretary-General to settle disputes by peaceful means and to consolidate the tenets of international peace and security, and we wish to recognize his contribution to the establishment of a just peace in the Middle East on the basis of international legitimacy and the implementation of the relevant Security Council resolutions.

At the Arab Summit held in Amman, the capital of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, on 27 and 28 March 2001, the Council of the League of Arab States expressed support for the re-election of Mr. Kofi Annan to a second term of office as United Nations Secretary-General. While cognizant of the serious tasks entrusted to him by the international community, his outstanding record of work and continuous effort for realizing the hopes of the international community assures us that the international community has placed its confidence in the right person.

Today, on this momentous occasion, and on behalf of the Arab Group, it gives me great pleasure to extend sincere congratulations to Mr. Kofi Annan on his re-election to a second term of office as Secretary-General. We wish him success in realizing the aspirations of the international community, establishing international peace and security and global stability, and we assure him that we look forward to fully cooperating with him in order to fulfil the hopes and objectives for which the United Nations was founded.

The President: I call on the representative of the United States of America, His Excellency Mr. James B. Cunningham, who will speak on behalf of the host country.

Mr. Cunningham (United States of America): On behalf of the United States of America, in its role as host country to the United Nations, I warmly welcome the reappointment of Mr. Kofi Annan as Secretary-General of the United Nations. As members may recall, President Bush heartily endorsed Mr. Annan's second term as Secretary-General on the occasion of their first meeting, in March. My Government is especially pleased that the Secretary-General is willing to take up again this heavy responsibility.

For the Government of the United States, the phrase "international community" is best understood as men and women of goodwill who not only represent the best values of their nations, but who also transcend their differences to strive for the common good of humanity. In Secretary-General Annan we have the personification of the international community, a global citizen who gives voice to all the people of our United Nations. To the suffering, he is the face of our compassion. For those who live under tyranny, he is the personification of our commitment to inalienable human rights. For those who live in zones of conflict, he is the embodiment of our commitment to peace and justice. And to all of us and our Governments, he has led the effort to reform the United Nations and to lead it into the twenty-first century.

Secretary-General Annan's life and career have been dedicated to meeting some of the greatest challenges of the twentieth century and the aspirations of the twenty-first. He has been a witness to some of the greatest accomplishments in our century and to some of its worst tragedies. The Secretary-General joined the United Nations in 1963 and has committed himself to its highest ideals over a career that spans nearly 40 years. Each United Nations success has been greeted with his characteristic humility and each setback with the equally characteristic deep introspection born of the conviction that we can improve — we must improve — our adherence to the United Nations Charter and the United Nations capabilities.

Secretary-General Annan's reappointment is especially timely just days after the General Assembly special session on HIV/AIDS. This historic session illustrates the compassion, innovation and determination the Secretary-General brings to the job. I would hope that all of us could emulate his example in this new millennium of promise.

Kofi Annan often says he must be part general and part secretary. In the war on AIDS he has become our general. He has marshalled an unprecedented public-private coalition. He has broken false taboos that threaten millions of lives. He has persuaded the powerful and he has comforted the dying. I trust he will continue to challenge us in the name of the ideals that unite us.

In addition to congratulating Secretary-General Annan, we must also thank him for his renewed commitment to the United Nations. As one of 189 proud Members of this Organization, we are grateful

for his leadership, and we appreciate very much as well the contribution and sacrifice of his wife, Nane.

We pledge our support for the Secretary-General as he leads this indispensable Organization into the twenty-first century.

The President: We have heard the last speaker in the debate on this item. We have thus concluded our consideration of agenda item 187.

The meeting rose at 11:05 a.m.

United Nations A/55/PV.106

General Assembly

Fifty-fifth session

Official Records

106th plenary meeting
Thursday, 12 July 2001, 10 a.m.
New York

President: Mr. Holkeri ..... (Finland)

The meeting was called to order at 10 a.m.

Tribute to the memory of H.E. Mr. Humayun Rasheed Choudhury, President of the forty-first session of the General Assembly

The President: Before we take up the item on our agenda this morning, it is my sad duty to inform members of the Assembly of the death of His Excellency Mr. Humayun Rasheed Choudhury of Bangladesh this past Tuesday.

Mr. Choudhury was President of the forty-first session of the General Assembly in 1986. In addition, during his long and very distinguished diplomatic career, he served as Minister for Foreign Affairs of Bangladesh from 1985 to 1988 as well as Ambassador of Bangladesh to various countries. He represented his country at a large number of international conferences, including United Nations conferences and other meetings. A member of the Parliament of Bangladesh for several years, at the time of his death he was the Speaker of the National Assembly. A skilful diplomat and negotiator, he will be remembered for his devotion to his country and to the ideals and principles of the United Nations.

On behalf of the General Assembly, I should like to convey our deepest condolences to the Government and the people of Bangladesh and to the bereaved family of Mr. Choudhury.

I now invite representatives to stand and observe a minute of silence in tribute to the memory of His Excellency Mr. Humayun Rasheed Choudhury.

The members of the General Assembly observed a minute of silence.

The President: I give the floor to the Deputy Secretary-General.

The Deputy Secretary-General: On behalf of the Secretary-General and of all the members of the Secretariat, I join you, Sir, in expressing my sincere condolences on the death of His Excellency Mr. Humayun Rasheed Choudhury. Our thoughts today go to his family and to the Government and people of Bangladesh.

Mr. Choudhury was not only a wonderful envoy for his country and a fine Speaker of his country's Parliament; he was also a world citizen and a veteran of world diplomacy. During a long and distinguished career that began before the birth of the State of Bangladesh, he not only witnessed history being made, he took part in making it happen. He represented his country with devotion and served at the United Nations with distinction.

At a challenging time in the life of this Organization, we were privileged to have him as the President of the forty-first session of the General Assembly. Later in his life, he understood well the paramount challenge facing the international community at the start of the twenty-first century: the need to put people at the centre of everything we do.

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the interpretation of speeches delivered in the other languages. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room C-178. Corrections will be issued after the end of the session in a consolidated corrigendum.

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Only two years ago, in a speech to Asian parliamentarians, he summed it up eloquently:

> "Our political commitment is certainly important, but even more so is the demand of our citizens for peace in the heart of the common man in the villages and in the cities."

On behalf of the United Nations, allow me to join him in that appeal and to give thanks for his contribution in making it heard far and wide.

The President: I call on the representative of Rwanda, who will speak on behalf of the African States.

Mr. Gasana (Rwanda) (*spoke in French*): It was with deep sadness and great emotion that the members of the Group of African States learned of the death of the President of the National Assembly of Bangladesh, the late Mr. Humayun Rasheed Choudhury.

It is not only Bangladesh that has just lost a man of courage and talent; it is all of us, the members of the international community whom he served, in particular in 1986 and 1987, when he was President of the General Assembly.

Since then, that very close partnership between him — a former President of the General Assembly — and the United Nations has become a partnership between Bangladesh and the United Nations, through the United Nations peacekeeping forces provided by Bangladesh, inter alia, in Africa, in Rwanda in 1993, 1994 and 1995, and today in Sierra Leone.

The country of the former President of the General Assembly has risked, and is risking, the lives of its sons and daughters — its soldiers — who are very far away from home in Africa — in Rwanda and in Sierra Leone. Its objective is not to serve Bangladesh's own agenda as an individual country, but to help to achieve the lofty goal of the United Nations: peace among men and among nations. The African Group thanks Bangladesh wholeheartedly.

In conclusion, the African Group would like to pay a heartfelt tribute to this worthy son of Bangladesh and of Asia. We convey our deepest condolences to his family, his beautiful country, Bangladesh, to Asia and to the entire United Nations family. May God receive his soul, and may he rest in peace.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Qatar, His Excellency Mr. Nassir Abdulaziz Al-Nasser, who will speak on behalf of the Asian States.

Mr. Al-Nasser (Qatar) (*spoke in Arabic*): On behalf of the Asian Group, and on my own behalf, I would like to express our deepest sorrow and condolences to the family of Mr. Humayun Rasheed Choudhury, who died on 10 July 2001, and to the friendly Government and people of Bangladesh.

As the Assembly knows, Mr. Choudhury was an important General Assembly President. He devoted all his noble efforts to the service of the United Nations. The Asian Group feels very sad at the loss of such an outstanding person, one who had a great influence on the work of the Assembly's forty-first session.

As everyone knows, Mr. Choudhury played a great and distinguished role as Minister for Foreign Affairs of his country from 1985 to 1988. During that period, he played an important part in the enhancement and consolidation of peace and in negotiating many agreements and treaties that helped the Asian continent.

Finally, Mr. President, I would like, on behalf of the Asian Group, to thank you for your wisdom on this occasion to pay tribute to Mr. Humayun Rasheed Choudhury. May God bless his soul.

The President: I give the floor to the representative of Bulgaria, His Excellency Mr. Stefan Tafrov, who will speak on behalf of the Eastern European States.

Mr. Tafrov (Bulgaria): I take the floor on the occasion of a sad event that brought deep sorrow and grief to the people of Bangladesh two days ago — the passing of Mr. Humayun Rasheed Choudhury, Speaker of the Bangladesh National Parliament.

On 10 July, the heart of one of the prominent political figures and great leaders of Bangladesh stopped beating; his life-long commitment and personal contribution to the foreign policy of his country and to the work of the United Nations was internationally recognized and highly appreciated.

Recalling Mr. Humayun Choudhury's wide popularity among the people of his country, one might rightly say that he was a charismatic national leader with an outstanding personality. It is an undeniable fact that, thanks to Mr. Choudhury's personal efforts and proven diplomatic skills, Bangladesh achieved great

success in the development of cooperation with the Asian countries and with the international community as a whole. Mr. Choudhury's distinguished professional and personal qualifications were proved by his effective ruling of the work of the Bangladesh National Parliament. His wise leadership as President of the General Assembly at its forty-first session contributed to the successful accomplishment of the debates and the adoption and effective implementation of relevant General Assembly resolutions.

The bitter news about the passing of Mr. Choudhury echoes with the feeling of loss in the hearts of the Bangladesh people and leaders of the international community. On behalf of the Governments and the peoples of the Eastern European States, I have the honour to extend our most sincere condolences to the Mr. Choudhury's family and to the people of Bangladesh. May his soul rest in peace.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Grenada, His Excellency Mr. Lamuel Stanislaus, who will speak on behalf of the Latin American and Caribbean States.

Mr. Stanislaus (Grenada): The Member States of the Latin America and Caribbean Group, for which I have the honour to speak, learned with surprise and sadness of the sudden, unexpected and untimely death of Mr. Humayun Rasheed Choudhury, Speaker of the Bangladesh National Parliament and a great former Minister for Foreign Affairs of his country, from 1985 to 1988.

Members of the Group would like, through the Permanent Representative of Bangladesh to the United Nations, to convey to the Government and the people of that great country, and to the immediate family — his spouse, son and daughter — their deep and heartfelt sympathy.

Mr. Choudhury was one of the most experienced professional diplomats in the developing world, having served with distinction and competence in a series of diplomatic posts, both at home and abroad. He was a student, scholar, lawyer, politician, businessman, statesman, spouse and father par excellence.

On a personal note, I had the pleasure and satisfaction of knowing and benefiting from the wise, skilful, thoughtful and inclusive leadership of the deceased when he served with distinction as President of the forty-first session of the United Nations General Assembly. I was then a young diplomat in my mid-60s, a newcomer to the niceties of diplomacy and foreign affairs, inspired and motivated, however, by such a dynamic personality. President Choudhury was particularly concerned with safeguarding the rights and privileges of all Member States — large and small, rich and poor. Wherever humanly possible, he made it his business to preside, even when the smallest State was speaking, thereby demonstrating his great respect for the sovereign equality of States.

Amidst life, there is death. We do not know when, why, how or where this physical event will occur. Yet the suddenness of it, as in the case of one whom we knew and loved, leaves us in great shock and reminds us of our own mortality.

As we mourn his loss, we nevertheless celebrate a useful, constructive and productive life that was spent in the service of his great country and in the service of the international community.

Finally, in the words of a great psalmist, we reaffirm the following:

> "And when it is morning, take heed that thou mayest not live to see the evening. And when eventide is come, presume not to promise thyself another day. Be therefore in readiness stand and so order they life, that when death comes it will not find thee unprepared."

Requiescat in pace. May he rest in peace.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Finland, Her Excellency Ms. Anna-Maija Korpi, who will speak on behalf of the Western European and other States.

Ms. Korpi (Finland): It is with deep sorrow, as Chairperson of the Group of Western European and other States, that I express condolences on behalf of the members of the Group on the passing away of Mr. Humayun Rasheed Choudhury, Speaker of the Bangladesh National Parliament, former Minister for Foreign Affairs of Bangladesh and former President of the General Assembly.

Our sympathy and condolences are offered to the Government and the people of Bangladesh and to Mr. Choudhury's family.

Humayun Rasheed Choudhury dedicated his long diplomatic and parliamentary career to his country, Bangladesh. Fifteen years have passed since he

presided over the General Assembly, 15 years during which he and his country have undergone a tremendous, deep transformation, becoming a country of great achievements. Bangladesh is a strong partner today. It has shown the courage and ability to work for peace and stability.

It is our duty to pay tribute to the statesman Humayun Rasheed Choudhury for the work he did for his country and the world community, especially the United Nations. Bangladesh has masterfully chaired the least developed countries group at the United Nations. It is at present a member of the Security Council. On this sad occasion of the passing of Mr. Humayun Rasheed Choudhury, his country, Bangladesh, should be gratified to know that its leaders — such as Humayun Rasheed Choudhury — have made the country known and held in high esteem by the world community.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of the United States of America, His Excellency Mr. James Cunningham, on behalf of the host country.

Mr. Cunningham (United States of America): On behalf of the United States delegation, as host country, I would like to extend my condolences to the Government, the delegation and the people of Bangladesh on the passing of Mr. Humayun Rasheed Choudhury. Mr. Choudhury was widely known as a consummate diplomat and public servant. He served with distinction as President of the General Assembly in 1986, showing great dedication to the ideals of this Organization. As a statesman, Foreign Minister and diplomat, Mr. Choudhury devoted considerable energy to realizing the national aspirations and goals of Bangladesh. This work culminated in his recent distinguished service as Speaker of his country's Parliament.

My country, especially, enjoyed the close friendship of Mr. Choudhury. He served ably as Ambassador to the United States in the early 1980s. Mr. Choudhury's wisdom, talent and grace will be missed in his own country, in America and on the world stage. Mr. Choudhury's countrymen and family have our greatest sympathies.

The President: I now give the floor to the Permanent Representative of Bangladesh, His Excellency Mr. Anwarul Karim Chowdhury.

Mr. Chowdhury (Bangladesh): On behalf of the Government of Bangladesh, I would like to express our sincere gratitude to Member States of the United Nations for the condolences and sympathy they have extended at this special tribute of the General Assembly on the occasion of the sad demise of the honourable Speaker of the Bangladesh National Parliament and President of the forty-first session of the General Assembly, Mr. Humayun Rasheed Choudhury. We are very thankful to you, Mr. President, for the opportunity of holding this event and for your kind remarks on this occasion.

On behalf of my Government, I would like to thank Deputy Secretary-General Louise Fréchette for her very moving message on behalf of the Secretary-General and the Secretariat. We are truly touched by the kind and gracious remarks delivered by the Chairmen of the five regional groups of the United Nations — the representatives of Rwanda, Qatar, Bulgaria, Grenada and Finland — and by the representative of the host country, the United States.

This morning's tribute has indeed been a genuine recognition of the lifelong achievements and endeavours of the late Ambassador Choudhury, who was a key figure in the arena of diplomacy and politics, both nationally and internationally.

Once again, on behalf of the Government of Bangladesh and on my own behalf, I am grateful for the kind gesture that has been made by one and all as a mark of respect for the eventful life of the late Mr. Choudhury. I will have the honour of transmitting the sentiments expressed here at this plenary meeting to the Government of Bangladesh and to the members of his very bereaved family.

Agenda item 122 (*continued*)

Scale of assessments for the apportionment of the expenses of the United Nations

Letter dated 11 July 2001 from the Secretary-General to the President of the General Assembly (A/55/1015)

The President: I would now like to invite the attention of the General Assembly to document A/55/1015. It contains a letter from the Secretary-General addressed to me, in which he informs the Assembly that 16 Member States are in arrears in the

payment of their financial contributions to the United Nations within the terms of Article 19 of the Charter.

I would like to remind delegations that, under Article 19 of the Charter,

> "A Member of the United Nations which is in arrears in the payment of its financial contributions to the Organization shall have no vote in the General Assembly if the amount of its arrears equals or exceeds the amount of the contributions due from it for the preceding two full years."

May I take it that the General Assembly duly takes note of the information contained in document A/55/1015?

It was so decided.

Agenda item 10 (*continued*)

Report of the Secretary-General on the work of the Organization

Report of the Secretary-General on the prevention of armed conflict (A/55/985 and Corr.1)

The President: As I stressed in my letter of 18 June 2001 addressed to all Member States and observers, this is a very important report that needs to be considered by the General Assembly. Therefore, I scheduled this plenary debate for this early date, although I am aware of the very tight schedule of Member States.

Given the limited time we have now, I also proposed in my letter that after this debate a short procedural resolution be adopted whereby the report of the Secretary-General would be forwarded to all relevant organs within the United Nations system and other actors addressed in the report for their consideration and review, further recommendations and action. These organs could be invited to report to the General Assembly during its fifty-sixth session. At that session the Assembly could consider the report and all recommendations in a comprehensive manner and also discuss the recommendations addressed to the Assembly. My Office is preparing a draft resolution to this effect, and it will be circulated to Member States for their consideration in due course.

I now give the floor to the Deputy Secretary-General to present the report of the Secretary-General.

The Deputy Secretary-General: Recent debates in this Assembly — most notably during the Millennium Summit last September — have shown wide agreement on the need to make conflict prevention a central pillar of our collective security system in the twenty-first century. Indeed, there is a broad consensus that the most promising approach to preventing armed conflict is to develop long-term and integrated strategies, combining a wide range of measures aimed at eradicating or reducing the underlying causes of conflict. In the Millennium Declaration, world leaders pledged to enhance the effectiveness of the United Nations in this field.

The United Nations system already contributes significantly to the prevention of armed conflict. Yet if the report that I have the pleasure to present to the Assembly today has one message, it is that we must intensify those efforts.

The costs of not preventing violence are enormous. They are counted not only in damage inflicted, but also in opportunities lost.

The international community spent about $200 billion on the seven major interventions of the 1990s, in Bosnia, Somalia, Rwanda, Haiti, the Persian Gulf, Cambodia and El Salvador. And such calculations do not, of course, reflect the human costs of war and their repercussions for families, communities, local and national institutions and economies and neighbouring countries.

Drawing on the lessons we have learned, the Secretary-General suggests that the following 10 principles should guide our future approach to conflict prevention: First, conflict prevention is one of the primary obligations of Member States set forth in the Charter, and our efforts in conflict prevention must be in conformity with the purposes and principles of the Charter.

Second, conflict prevention must begin with national Governments and local actors. The United Nations and the international community should support their efforts and assist them in building national capacities.

Third, the most useful instruments of prevention are those described in Chapter VI of the Charter, which deals with the peaceful settlement of disputes.

Measures under Chapter VII are normally taken only after a conflict has broken out, although they may still have a preventive effect by deterring other potential conflicts. There may also be cases where certain measures under Chapter VII, such as economic sanctions, can be used preventively.

Fourth, to be most effective, preventive action should be initiated as early as possible.

Fifth, the primary focus of prevention should be the multidimensional root causes of conflict. The proximate cause of conflict may be an outbreak of public disorder or a protest over a particular incident, but the root causes are more likely to be found in socio-economic inequities, systematic ethnic discrimination, denial of human rights, disputes over political participation, or long-standing grievances over the allocation of land, water and other resources.

Sixth, an effective preventive strategy requires a comprehensive approach that encompasses both short-term and long-term political, developmental, humanitarian and human rights programmes.

Seventh, conflict prevention and sustainable development reinforce each other. An investment in prevention should be seen as a simultaneous investment in sustainable development, since it is obvious that the latter is more likely to happen in a peaceful environment.

Eighth, United Nations development programmes and activities can also be viewed from a conflict prevention perspective. This, in turn, requires greater coherence and coordination in the United Nations system.

Ninth, the United Nations is not the only actor in prevention, and may not always be the actor best suited to take the lead. Member States, international and regional organizations, the private sector, non-governmental organizations and other civil society actors also have very important roles to play.

Finally, tenth, effective preventive action by the United Nations requires sustained political will on the part of Member States. That includes first and foremost a readiness to provide the United Nations with the political support and resources necessary for undertaking effective preventive action and for developing its institutional capacity in this field.

Let me turn now to what the Assembly, based on those principles, can do to enhance its role in conflict prevention. The report recommends a wide range of actions, including: considering a more active use of the Assembly's powers, in accordance with Articles 10, 11 and 14 of the Charter; and contributing to the establishment of prevention practices at the local, national, regional and global levels — and the Assembly has already created norms that have a bearing on the prevention of conflicts, for example resolution 43/51, which contains an annex entitled "Declaration on the Prevention and Removal of Disputes and Situations Which May Threaten International Peace and Security and the Role of the United Nations in this Field".

Another such action is promoting a culture of prevention. A number of items on the Assembly's agenda, such as development, disarmament, human rights, humanitarian assistance, democratization, environmental degradation, terrorism and AIDS, have a conflict prevention dimension.

Next is enhancing the Assembly's interaction with the Security Council, particularly in developing long-term conflict prevention and peace-building strategies. General Assembly members should have an opportunity to express their views on conflict prevention more often in the Council.

The Secretary-General also urges the Assembly to consider authorizing him, as well as other United Nations organs, to take advantage of the advisory competence of the International Court of Justice. Needless to say, Member States themselves are urged to resort to the Court earlier and more often to settle their disputes, to accept the general jurisdiction of the Court and, when adopting multilateral treaties under United Nations auspices, to adopt clauses providing for disputes to be referred to the Court.

The report contains further recommendations regarding the role of other principal United Nations organs, which I encourage members to study carefully if they have not already done so. For example, the Secretary-General recommends that a future high-level segment of the annual session of the Economic and Social Council should address the root causes of conflict and the role of development in promoting long-term conflict prevention.

Because of their proximity and their greater grasp of the historical background of a conflict, regional

organizations too can contribute significantly to conflict prevention. The Secretary-General calls on Member States to support the follow-up processes launched by the last two high-level meetings between the United Nations and regional organizations, which dealt with conflict prevention and peace-building respectively.

He urges non-governmental organizations with an interest in conflict prevention to organize an international conference of local, national and international non-governmental organizations on their role in conflict prevention and on future interaction with the United Nations in that field. And he encourages the business community to adopt socially responsible practices that foster a climate of peace in conflict-prone societies, help prevent and mitigate crisis situations, and contribute to reconstruction and reconciliation.

The United Nations system has made a promising start in engendering a culture of prevention in its day-to-day activities. Yet an adequate capacity for conflict prevention is still lacking. That capacity should be strengthened in the Secretariat and in other relevant parts of the United Nations system. There is also a need for United Nations conflict prevention activities to be placed on a more stable and predictable financial basis.

Effective conflict prevention clearly requires action that goes beyond what is recommended in the report, and indeed beyond any institutional mechanism. The international community has a moral responsibility to ensure that vulnerable people are protected. We must prevent genocide like that perpetrated in Rwanda from ever happening again.

Why is effective conflict prevention still so seldom practised? And why do we so often fail when there is a clear potential for a preventive strategy to succeed? Past experience offers two main answers. First, if the Government concerned refuses to admit that it has a problem which could lead to violent conflict and rejects offers of assistance, there often is very little that outside actors, including the United Nations, can do. Secondly, the international community all too often lacks the political will to take effective action in time.

But such attitudes are not the only obstacle. No less significant are the ways in which Member States define their national interest in any given crisis. A new, more broadly defined, more widely conceived definition of national interest in the new century would induce States to find far greater unity in the pursuit of the fundamental goals of the Charter, including conflict prevention. As the Secretary-General has stressed,

> "in ... a growing number of challenges facing humanity, the collective interest *is* the national interest". (*A/55/985, para. 164*)

Preventive strategies are not easy to implement. The costs of prevention have to be paid in the present, while its benefits lie in the future. In addition, the benefits are often not tangible: when prevention succeeds, little happens that is visible. Yet the report clearly demonstrates that conflict prevention is the most desirable and cost-effective approach to promoting the peaceful and just international order envisaged in the Charter.

Governments provide the best protection for their citizens against unwelcome outside interference when they peacefully resolve a situation that might deteriorate into a violent conflict, and call for preventive assistance as soon as it is needed. Used in this way, international preventive action can significantly strengthen the capacity of Member States to preserve and exercise their national sovereignty.

The time has come to translate the rhetoric of conflict prevention into concrete action. Moving from a culture of reaction to one of effective prevention will require sustained political will and a long-term commitment of resources, not least in the field of economic and social development. Indeed, development assistance plays an important role in reducing poverty and inequalities, and in enhancing justice, governance, human rights and security. Thus, it is a powerful preventive tool. It is therefore essential to increase the flow of official development assistance, which, as a percentage of gross national product, dropped last year to the lowest level ever.

It is my hope, and the Secretary-General's hope, that the United Nations system and Member States will be able to work together towards the implementation of the recommendations contained in this report.

The President: I should like to inform members that in a letter dated 10 July 2001, addressed to me, the Chargé d'affaires of the Permanent Mission of Finland to the United Nations, in her capacity as Chairperson of the Group of Western European and other States for the

month of July, requests that the General Assembly hear a statement by the observer of Switzerland in the debate on the report of the Secretary-General on prevention of armed conflict. Taking into account the importance attached to the issue under discussion, it is proposed that the General Assembly should take a decision on that request.

May I take it that there is no objection to the proposal to hear the observer of Switzerland in the debate on the report of the Secretary-General?

It was so decided.

Mr. Chowdhury (Bangladesh): As a focus of its foreign policy and diplomatic efforts, Bangladesh has been stressing that conflict prevention is a political, humanitarian, economic and moral imperative. We therefore consider it a special occasion that the General Assembly of the United Nations, for the first time, is taking up prevention of armed conflict as a specific subject matter. We were actively involved in the deliberations when the General Assembly addressed the matter in the past within the broader context of the Agenda for Peace and its supplement. Bangladesh took the initiative in promoting a preventive culture. We focused on long-term measures that contribute to building the foundations of durable peace. Our efforts led to the adoption by the General Assembly at its fifty-third session of the Declaration and Programme of Action on a Culture of Peace. This timeless document is contained in resolution 53/243.

The Security Council, for its part, has been addressing this issue and held open debates in November 1999 and July 2000. It transpired from the debates at the Council, where a large number of the United Nations membership took part, that conflict prevention required a comprehensive, system-wide approach. It became increasingly clear that prevention required the active involvement of all actors: Member States, regional organizations, the United Nations, its funds and programmes, the Bretton Woods institutions, non-governmental organizations, the private sector and civil society in general.

The Security Council, hence, asked for a report by the Secretary-General to be submitted also to the General Assembly. As introduced by Deputy Secretary-General Louise Fréchette, this seminal report contains recommendations for a comprehensive approach to the prevention of armed conflict involving system-wide action. These recommendations have been submitted after extensive consultations within the United Nations system. It is up to us now to act on them.

As the Secretary-General mentions, the 1997 Carnegie Commission report came up with revealing figures. The international community spent $200 billion on the seven major wars of the 1990s. Preventive action, the report indicates, could have saved $130 billion. In the case of Rwanda, a reinforced United Nations mission capable of preventing the genocide would have cost $500 million. Instead, the international community ultimately spent $4.5 billion in assistance to Rwanda following the genocide.

The human cost of war is incalculable. I ask the Assembly to think of the genocide in Rwanda, the massacre in Srebrenica and the mass killings committed in Kosovo, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Sierra Leone, Angola and elsewhere in the world. Think of the individual fellow human beings — men, women and children — whom we failed to save from the ravages of war, death, suffering and humiliation. The legacies of war are long borne by nations. For these nations, the present is in ruins; but the future is also rendered bleak by armed conflicts, not to speak of the collapsed States. We have a Charter commitment, a moral obligation to save people from the devastations of war.

The Security Council, on receipt of the report from the Secretary-General, held a day-long debate on 21 June, 2001 with the participation of the broader membership of the United Nations. The open debate held under the Bangladesh presidency focused on the recommendations relating to the role of the Security Council and received a positive response from the participants. Earlier this week, Bangladesh initiated consideration by the Security Council of action on the recommendation within its competence through a draft resolution.

We appreciate that the Secretary-General was engaged in an extensive consultative process involving all major actors in articulating his recommendations in the report. Bangladesh supports almost all of them. On this occasion, let me address a few core issues.

First, the role of the Security Council: its primary responsibility is to maintain international peace and security, in other words, the prevention of conflicts, peacekeeping or peace enforcement. Preventive action includes peacekeeping and peace-building. It can work

when the Security Council is able to play its role effectively, objectively and without constraints.

The Security Council should be able to take decisions on the basis of what a given situation demands, on the basis of the merit of the case, and not on the basis of what some members of the Council are willing to support. I need not go into details. The Carlsson report on genocide in Rwanda and the Secretary-General's report on the Srebrenica massacre have been revealing. We should benefit from the lessons learned from these debacles. I would draw attention to the need for follow-up to such reports. An imperative for the international community is to bring necessary sustained support to post-conflict peace-building so that tragedies that it failed to prevent do not occur again.

Secondly, with respect to political will, the Secretary-General has on various occasions expressed regret concerning the lack of critical political will. The euphemism stands for the absence of willingness to join others in concerted action, as well as a lack of willingness on the part of Member States, particularly those in a position to do so, to provide necessary men and money. Unless we are able to break these shackles, conflict prevention will remain elusive in the real sense.

Thirdly, as to the relation between conflict prevention and sustainable development, we see the two as complementary and mutually reinforcing. The measures recommended for structural prevention seek to address the root causes of conflict. They are very much those on the economic and social agenda of the United Nations. We fully agree with the recommendation that preventive strategies be integrated into the socio-economic development programme, where necessary.

Fourthly, concerning investment in prevention, the greatest difficulty in getting resources for preventive action is that its costs have to be borne now, while its results lie in the future. Investment in conflict prevention should be seen as our premium for a secure future, a future insured against the costs of war — financial, human and material — a future assured of shared security instead of a shared burden. This is the main message of the Secretary-General in his report.

Fifthly, we must move from a culture of reaction to a culture of prevention. The conflicts that arose across four continents in the 1990s were certainly not simply a post-cold-war phenomenon. They also resulted from our mistaken approach to peace and security. For too long and on too many occasions, we waited to react instead of acting to prevent.

The General Assembly needs to respond to the report of the Secretary-General by supporting his recommendations and by providing guidance for their implementation. Bangladesh would set the following priorities.

First, as to addressing the root causes of conflicts, the Secretary-General's April 1998 report on the causes of conflict in Africa should provide the basis for action. Secondly, there must be full and effective implementation of the plans and programmes of action coming out of the major United Nations conferences of the 1990s. A great deal of the objectives of conflict prevention will be achieved if we can make substantive progress there. Thirdly, we must provide the Organization with the human and financial resources necessary to properly carry out its responsibilities and missions. Additional resources are certainly necessary, but we also believe that better management of resources will strengthen arguments in favour of increased support. Fourthly, the least developed countries are among the most vulnerable. Many of the least developed countries are affected by armed conflicts. In this context, the Brussels Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries should receive the special attention of the international community. Fifthly, this week we have been deliberating on the threats of small arms and light weapons. Member States must act seriously to curb the arms bazaar and destroy the arsenals. We look forward to the adoption of an effective programme of action now being negotiated.

Long-term conflict prevention objectives can be reinforced by effective implementation of the Declaration and Programme of Action on a Culture of Peace. In this context, the Secretary-General makes a specific recommendation in his report. He recalls that the Assembly, in its resolution 53/243,

> "called on Member States, civil society and the whole United Nations system to promote activities related to conflict prevention". (*55/985, para. 29*)

We would underscore strongly the need for creative implementation of this recommendation at the national, regional and global levels. Every war and

every conflict challenges the foundation of the United Nations. Armed conflicts must be prevented, given the magnitude of death, destruction and suffering and the physical and moral burden placed by them on the international community. The responsibility has to be assumed by all. The Secretary-General has recommended some useful measures in that direction. Let us respond positively.

Mr. Erwa (Sudan) (*spoke in Arabic*): My country's delegation would like to thank you, Sir, for convening this debate to discuss the prevention of conflicts, which lies at the very heart of the General Assembly's competence under Articles 10, 11 and 14 of the United Nations Charter. We should also like to voice our appreciation to the Secretary-General for his detailed report on conflict prevention, the topic of this meeting, and to welcome last month's initiative of the Security Council to convene a special meeting to debate this issue. We expect that similar debates will be held in the specialized agencies and organs of the United Nations in order to establish a clear strategy and vision that would guide the General Assembly on the path to conflict prevention.

My delegation has considered in depth the Secretary-General's report in document A/55/985 and the recommendations contained therein. We take this opportunity to comment on the report and we hope that our contribution will enrich our debate. We cannot address every recommendation and will therefore focus on a select few.

At the outset, our delegation believes that there is a close link between the Secretary-General's reports on the prevention of conflicts and on the causes of conflict in Africa. The latter report characterized in detail the causes of conflict in Africa as being rooted in the colonial period and in socio-economic and external factors. My delegation also believes that addressing the root causes of these conflicts is essential to preventing their recurrence, given the different and specific natures of such conflicts from one region to another.

In its preventive action, the United Nations is called upon strictly to apply the purposes and principles of the United Nations Charter, in particular those relating to political independence, sovereignty, non-interference in the internal affairs of States, territorial integrity and the peaceful settlement of disputes, as provided for in Chapter VI of the Charter, in accordance with the principles of justice and international law.

In this context, we are pleased that the Secretary-General has clearly stressed the importance of this principle by stating that the efforts of the United Nations in conflict prevention should be in keeping with the purposes and principles of the Charter. Secondly, we support the Secretary-General's efforts to ensure that the United Nations moves from a culture of reaction to a culture of prevention. We believe that such a preventive approach would make it possible for the international community to save lives and preserve material resources that could be invested in conflict prevention. We agree with him that the main responsibility in conflict prevention lies with the national Governments and that the main role of the United Nations and the international community is to support national efforts as an investment in sustainable development.

Thirdly, we support the Secretary-General's first recommendation, that the authority of the General Assembly should be strengthened by establishing long-term conflict prevention strategies in the framework of an open-ended working group that will work to develop the necessary strategies on the basis of General Assembly resolutions on conflict prevention. We also support recommendation 4, on the role of the Economic and Social Council in the field of conflict prevention. This recommendation is closely linked to the need to deal with the root causes of conflict, given the role of the Economic and Social Council in the areas of development and the eradication of poverty. This also applies to recommendation 5, on the International Court of Justice.

Fourthly, we welcome and support the strengthening of the role of the Secretary-General — his well-known role in conflict prevention under the Charter and his concern to cooperate with Member States to that end. With regard to the informal network that the Secretary-General would like to create by bringing together eminent persons with a view to preventing conflicts, we believe that it should be based on transparent criteria, including consultations with Member States.

Fifthly, with regard to recommendation 14, on transparency in disarmament, we agree with the Secretary-General about the dangers of the proliferation of small arms and light weapons, and we

await with impatience the successful outcome of the United Nations Conference on the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects. We had hoped, however, that the report would also deal with the dangers of weapons of mass destruction, especially nuclear weapons, the most dangerous weapons of all.

Sixthly, with regard to recommendation 16, on activities in the area of human rights, we are convinced that human rights constitute a solid basis for conflict prevention. At the same time, however, we would like to issue a warning that analysis and information from human rights bodies and mechanisms in the area of conflict prevention should be used carefully, because as long as that machinery deals with human rights on a selective basis and for political reasons, with some countries being targeted and others not, and as long as eyes are closed and there is silence on the subject of human rights violations in many countries — and until such a time as transparency and objectivity prevail in the treatment of human rights issues in all countries without exception — this recommendation will not serve the primary and noble objective that prompted the Secretary-General to include it in his report. On the contrary, it would make it possible for the selective approach to continue and to be adopted by the human rights machinery within the United Nations system.

We understand and fully support Article 71 of the Charter, on the contribution that non-governmental organizations (NGOs) can make to achieving United Nations objectives, first and foremost in conflict prevention. Some NGOs have been successful in this field, as the Secretary-General has indicated in paragraph 143 of his report. Unfortunately, in recent years we have noted the appearance of NGOs that are working to inflame conflict instead of trying to put an end to bloodshed. In the Sudan, for example, we have seen NGOs working to directly support rebel movements by providing them with weapons, ammunition and logistical military capacity for their activities. This has taken place recently in the western Bahr el-Ghazal region of southern Sudan. Such activities create extremely dangerous situations, as the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs has confirmed. Unfortunately, such NGOs collect contributions in Western countries under the pretext of providing help and humanitarian assistance to the African people involved in the conflict.

Consequently, with regard to the implementation of this recommendation, if the NGO conference is convened, we will call for particular attention to be paid to the participation of responsible NGOs whose history and activities show that they have made a positive contribution in the field of conflict prevention, in cooperation with and with the complete participation of the Governments concerned.

In paragraph 110 of the report, the Secretary-General refers to the role of humanitarian agencies in the area of the so-called consolidated appeals with regard to zones and regions, which, for humanitarian reasons, are outside conflict areas so as to allow humanitarian assistance to reach vulnerable groups. I would like to say that the Government of the Sudan has extended full cooperation to the United Nations in the attainment of this humanitarian objective, especially to Operation Lifeline. The Government of the Sudan has always stated its desire for a general ceasefire so as to facilitate the inflow of humanitarian assistance to the affected population in order to create a climate of confidence to make it possible to strengthen peace efforts. But the rebel movement has repeatedly refused. The most recent aggression carried out by the rebel movement last month in the western part of Bahr el-Ghazal created a humanitarian crisis that caused thousands of people to leave their homes as they were getting ready for the harvest in the area described in the information bulletin of the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs as the breadbasket for the people of the region. We call upon the Inter-Agency Standing Committee on humanitarian affairs to respond positively to the request of developing countries to provide periodic information reports on humanitarian activities in all countries, thereby making such activities more transparent and strengthening confidence, the impartiality and integrity of the humanitarian activities carried out by this Organization in countries affected by armed conflict.

We attach great importance to recommendation 20 of the report of the Secretary-General, which gives the Emergency Relief Coordinator and United Nations agencies mandates that we believe are not based on the Charter of the United Nations or on resolutions of the General Assembly or the Security Council. There is a danger of deviation when it comes to this recommendation, consistent with the fact that certain United Nations humanitarian agencies have agreements with NGOs that are known for their hostility to certain Governments affected by the conflict.

Some of those non-governmental organizations have sided with the rebel movement by providing them with military support, which is in flagrant contradiction to their humanitarian objectives. I would even say that these NGOs are a third party in such conflicts, fuelling and perpetuating them.

As regards the recommendation proposing that the Security Council call on the Emergency Relief Coordinator to submit a report, on a periodic basis, to the members of the Council, we feel that this could marginalize the central role of the General Assembly, as defined in the Charter of the United Nations. I might add that this move is on the whole not safe from politically motivated selectivity, as recent experience has shown.

As regards food security and emergency food aid, as referred to in paragraph 113 of the report, certain African countries, including the Sudan, are convinced that the United Nations, especially those agencies responsible for managing humanitarian assistance in southern Sudan, know that responsibility for the situation there is that of the rebel movement. This is something that the entire world can see on its television screens.

Suffice it to mention in this context that many non-governmental organizations known for their responsible and impartial work have refused to bend to the pressures of the rebel movement to distribute assistance, so as not to see it fall into the hands of rebel fighters. Perhaps the main difference between the Government and the rebel movements in this area is that the rebel movements know that they have no legal responsibilities, which makes it possible for them to continue to appropriate the assistance provided and to use it to help their forces, to the detriment of innocent citizens affected by the conflict.

In conclusion, let me again say that I am very satisfied at the fact that this meeting will strengthen the principal role of the General Assembly as an international forum that is unique by virtue of the fact that it has worldwide representation. We hope that this leading role will be maintained in establishing guidelines for other agencies to develop the necessary strategies for conflict prevention.

Mr. de Ruyt (Belgium) (*spoke in French*): I have the honour of speaking on behalf of the European Union. The Central and Eastern European countries associated with the European Union — Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia — and the associated countries Cyprus, Malta and Turkey, as well as the member of the European Economic Area — Iceland — associate themselves with this statement.

I should like to begin by thanking the Deputy Secretary-General, Mrs. Fréchette, for her introduction of the Secretary-General's important report on the prevention of armed conflict. The European Union welcomes the holding of this debate and the opportunity it provides to all Member States to speak in broad lines to the questions raised in the report.

First of all, I should like to affirm the European Union's support for the general approach that has been proposed. Today's debate is only the beginning. We hope that following the discussions to be held in the various organs of the United Nations system and in other forums, the General Assembly will have the possibility of examining in its entirety the report and the recommendations it contains, thereby ensuring that consistency in the examination of this question.

All of us are profoundly concerned by the violent conflicts that continue to prevail throughout the world, and which are particularly worrisome in developing countries. The main consequences of these conflict are great suffering on the part of the population. They also have devastating effects on economic and social structures and on the environment in those countries.

Particular efforts should therefore be made in the area of conflict prevention. The cost of those efforts, in both human and financial terms, will be much less than that of managing or resolving such conflicts.

In this context, we would like to reiterate the commitments undertaken in the Millennium Declaration, which recognized the need to promote a culture of prevention. For the European Union, conflict prevention is part and parcel of a comprehensive, long-term approach whose objective is to resolve conflicts, strengthen peace and prevent new outbreaks.

We are in full agreement with the Secretary-General when he states that the primary responsibility for conflict prevention rests with national Governments and other local actors. We believe that viable solutions to potential conflicts can be found only through greater involvement of the Governments themselves. On this point, the European Union would like to stress the important complementary role that can be played by

civil society. This is due in part to the fact that civil society organizations are often present in the field, precisely where State structures are non-existent, and are in a good position to identify the root causes of conflicts at the earliest opportunity.

The international community must contribute to the development of local and regional capacities when it comes to conflict prevention, as the Secretary-General's report stresses. By way of example, the European Union is already cooperating with the Organization of African Unity (OAU) and African subregional organizations.

The European Union agrees with the Secretary-General as to the close link that exists between conflict prevention and sustainable development and the struggle against poverty. Development efforts are to no avail in conflict situations. Underdevelopment and poverty are among the factors underlying the outbreak of conflicts.

The Secretary-General rightly stresses the need to attack the root causes of conflicts. We believe that the international community should define an integrated, long-term approach to the question of sustainable development. An integrated approach must include the following aspects: sustainable economic development; democratization; respect for human rights, the rule of law and the principles of good governance; the fight against drugs and international crime; and support for progress in world health.

We congratulate the funds and programmes — in particular the United Nations Development Programme — for their supplementary efforts towards good governance and respect for the rule of law. The international financial institutions should similarly be made aware of this fact.

The promotion and protection of human rights and the examination of all violations of human rights must be an integral part of strategies to prevent armed conflict. This includes the full enjoyment by women of human rights and fundamental freedoms.

We share the view of the Secretary-General that the role of women in prevention efforts must be encouraged. It is also necessary to incorporate an analysis of gender-specific problems in early-warning activities.

The European Union attaches particular importance to the promotion and protection of the rights of children. As the Secretary-General rightly stresses, without hope for the future, young people can easily fall prey to those who are recruiting fighters. All strategies of conflict prevention must take into account the trauma caused by acts of violence of which children are either victims or witnesses.

At this very moment, the Conference on the Illicit Trade in Small Arms is taking place in the General Assembly Hall, and the European Union wishes to take this opportunity to stress the importance it gives to this issue in the context of conflict prevention.

We should mobilize the entire United Nations system. When it comes to the principal organs of the United Nations, we believe that increased cooperation between the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council and the Security Council is needed. We have already had the chance to address the role of the Security Council as concerns conflict prevention. I would like to add here that we endorse the recommendation that allows the General Assembly to exercise fully its responsibilities in the area of conflict prevention. The same applies to the Economic and Social Council, particularly when it is considering the causes of conflict that fall within its core mandate.

The Secretary-General has so far played an important role in conflict prevention. The European Union believes that this role must be strengthened. The Secretary-General should make full use of the prerogatives given him directly by the United Nations Charter and of his moral authority. The Union also recognizes the importance of the role of the Department of Political Affairs as coordinator of the efforts in conflict prevention.

In the international community, the European Union intends to contribute actively to efforts made in the area of conflict prevention. In the framework of its security and defence policy, the Union attaches great importance to improving the effectiveness and consistency of its external action in the area of conflict prevention. The objective is to improve the preventive capacities of the entire international community. A programme of action was adopted to that end at the recent European Summit at Goteborg, which marked the end of Sweden's Presidency. The European Union is convinced that all conflict prevention action must be carried out with the fullest respect for the purposes and principles of the United Nations Charter. The Union is seeking to develop enhanced cooperation with all

international and regional organizations, as well as with the representatives of civil society, in areas including advanced warning, analysis, action and evaluation. Among the concrete proposals envisaged with the United Nations are the intensification of exchanges of information, practical cooperation and joint training programmes for personnel both at Headquarters and in the field.

As to the financial area, the European Union and its member States, which are major contributors of official development assistance, will continue to honour their commitments. The Union is ready to discuss with the Secretary-General the financial implications of his report. The Secretary-General can count on the active support and cooperation of the European Union in the area of conflict prevention. We are ready to extend to him the assistance he desires in the preparation of a road map for the implementation of concrete recommendations.

We hope that important results will be achieved so that resolute progress can be made towards the objective of a world saved from the scourge of war.

Mr. Aboulgheit (Egypt) (*spoke in Arabic*): Mr. President, I would like to express our appreciation for your having convened this debate on conflict prevention. The importance of the debate is growing in the minds of many actors throughout the international community. The priority of the issues covered here has also been growing over the last decade. We wish to thank the Secretary-General for his major report on this issue.

The Egyptian delegation has a number of observations on the Secretary-General's report. I would like to set forth the following brief comments. First, we find that the basic premise of the report, as mentioned in paragraph 6, limits the prevention of armed conflicts to those occurring within States. While we understand that armed conflict may occur within States, we do not agree to limiting the concept of prevention to intra-State conflict, given that continuing, potentially explosive regional and international situations require major efforts to prevent them from erupting into global armed conflicts.

Second, my delegation has considered a number of relevant issues before the Security Council involving its work. We now deem it most important to affirm that the General Assembly, as the Secretary-General himself has mentioned, must assume its own role, major responsibilities and competencies in the prevention of armed conflict. In this regard, we support the first recommendation embodied in the report and invite the Member States to consider the ways and means for the General Assembly to play an active role, through the establishment of an open-ended working group to examine the Secretary-General's report.

Third, the Egyptian delegation is of the view that all proposals embodied in the report on activating the role of the major bodies of the United Nations in the realm of conflict prevention require setting aside additional financial resources. It is unacceptable to propose that the United Nations and its specialized agencies undertake a global approach to problems between societies or international problems and to promote the concept of prevention without making available the financial resources necessary for such a major transformation. As the Secretary-General is proposing that financing be carried out on a regular and orderly basis, a zero-growth budget cannot provide the financial resources required for action aimed at prevention without adversely affecting resources allocated for development, which is unacceptable.

Fourth, with regard to resources, the report sets forth the role that development plays in helping to prevent conflict. However, development cannot and must not have conflict prevention as its sole objective. It is, rather, a commitment on the part of donor countries to come to the aid of developing countries and to spur forward their development process based on priorities that the latter set. It is regrettable that such assistance, even in this context, thus far has neither reached the level hoped for nor is on a par with commitments earlier entered into. We are afraid that adding the goal of conflict prevention to the overriding goal of achieving development marks a major reversal for developing countries now receiving development assistance, particularly those not currently threatened by conflict. We also do not agree with paragraph 101, which asserts that any policy or programme aimed at development must be viewed from the perspective of conflict prevention.

Fifth, in the paragraphs on disarmament we have not found one single mention of weapons that threaten international peace and security, apart from small arms and light weapons. We fully understand that this kind of weaponry does indeed threaten the security of societies, particularly in the context of civil war and of intra-State conflicts that pit the citizens of a State

against one another. However, the report should not have ignored the importance that a growing number of States attach to nuclear disarmament and to ridding the world of weapons of mass destruction that jeopardize the very existence of entire societies. We invite the Secretary-General to close this gap as soon as possible.

Sixth, there is no doubt that conflict prevention efforts can and must take into consideration a great number of human rights, and not be confined to civil and political rights. They must consider on an equal footing economic, social and cultural rights, including the right to development. Egypt is convinced that the programmes of technical cooperation that the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights has undertaken together with various Governments are having a major impact on increasing awareness of human rights and the rule of law. These rights have a positive effect on disseminating the concept of a culture of peace, understanding and conciliation.

We acknowledge the importance of the efforts of the Security Council and the General Assembly to prevent armed conflict and their reliance on information and analyses published by human rights organizations and other mechanisms. We believe that in turn these organizations and mechanisms should be neutral and balanced and not be politicized. We also stress that these human rights bodies must investigate and confirm the credibility of the sources, especially non-governmental sources, on which they rely, inasmuch as these bodies base their analytical opinions and objective conclusions on such sources.

Seventh, the Egyptian delegation understands the particular importance attached to involving civil society in the work of the Organization. We note recommendation 28, in which the Secretary-General exhorts Member States to support his Global Compact initiative. However, we are not completely satisfied with the inclusion in paragraph 149 of the idea that this initiative would build upon what businesses can do to enhance human security. As far as we are concerned, the concept of human security is an open-ended, loose concept that has yet to be defined. We therefore look forward to seeing this concept and this initiative further developed and explored from all perspectives within a governmental framework, in implementation of General Assembly resolution 55/215.

Before concluding I would like to stress that in paragraph 77 of the Secretary-General's report there is a most unfortunate error. The occupied Palestinian territories are referred to as "the Occupied Territories". I had already drawn attention to this issue when I addressed the Security Council on 21 June. Alas, while a correction to the Secretary-General's report was issued, we feel that what we find in this paragraph reflects an effort on the part of certain groups within the Secretariat to circumvent that correction. I consider this a very serious issue with political repercussions. The position of these groups within the Secretariat must not be allowed to prevail. Moreover, I hope that a correction of that paragraph will indeed be immediately published.

I will bring up this issue when the Arab Group meets today. The Group will send a message on this issue to the Secretary-General.

These are our initial remarks on the report of the Secretary-General. The Egyptian delegation thanks you, Mr. President, once again for having organized this debate. We hope that it will be possible to continue this debate, consultations among delegations, so that we can arrive at a generally acceptable plan of action that enables us to pay due attention to the issue of the prevention of armed conflict.

The President: For the information of the representative of Egypt and of everyone else, document A/55/985/Corr.1 includes a correction to paragraph 77.

Mr. Cunningham (United States of America): I would like to thank the Deputy Secretary-General for her introduction of this important report. On the sixth anniversary of Srebrenica, it is right that we pause for a moment to reflect on the important mission of the United Nations and the need for continued and improved efforts to preserve peace and avoid conflict. I thank the Secretary-General, the Deputy Secretary-General and the Secretariat generally for their collective efforts to help all of us move the United Nations and the international community from a culture of reaction to a culture of prevention.

The report of the Secretary-General on the prevention of armed conflict is thought-provoking and provides us, and indeed the entire international system, with useful background and many recommendations to consider. My authorities will give them the careful review they deserve.

Leadership and political will are the two most important tools for effective conflict prevention. A

nation, an institution, a non-governmental organization or an individual can rise to the challenge of prevention. In his report the Secretary-General stressed that the primary responsibility for conflict prevention rests with national Governments, with civil society playing an important role. This is easier said than done, as history amply demonstrates, but the main role of the United Nations and the international community must be to support national conflict prevention efforts and to assist in building national capacity in this field.

Since a tremendous amount of United Nations resources is dedicated to addressing armed conflicts that have already erupted, the pertinent question we need to ask is how the United Nations, the Security Council, the General Assembly and the other United Nations bodies can work more effectively and realistically together. In addressing that question we need also to be aware that the United Nations system itself cannot succeed without the support of nations and of non-governmental actors as well.

The Secretary-General's report is very useful in clarifying how the various parts of the United Nations system can improve cooperation and coordination. We fully agree that the Secretary-General, the Security Council, the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council, the International Court of Justice and various United Nations agencies, funds and programmes all have important contributions to make. The United Nations system needs to break down barriers of communication that inhibit United Nations bodies and institutions from achieving better coordination.

I want especially to applaud the Secretary-General's commitment to enhancing his own role in preventing conflicts through four significant initiatives. He proposes to authorize more fact-finding and confidence-building missions to volatile regions; to build relationships between the United Nations and regional partners; to seek the help of a panel of eminent persons for conflict prevention; and to improve the capacity within the Secretariat in support of conflict prevention. All of those initiatives have our strong support.

The General Assembly has invited the Secretary-General to strengthen the capacity of the Secretariat for the collection of information and analysis, and to set up an early warning system. Given the tremendously important role of the Secretary-General in preventive diplomacy, that is a useful initiative. The Secretary-General should have easy access to information from across the Secretariat and from United Nations country teams in the field, so that he may pursue conflict prevention more effectively and efficiently. To aid him in that effort, there should be an office within the Secretariat that brings together and analyses the many diverse channels of information now flowing to separate United Nations offices. I commend the Secretary-General, the Panel on United Nations Peace Operations and the Special Committee on Peacekeeping Operations for their ongoing work in refining that concept.

We also applaud the Secretary-General's recognition of the important role that must be played by civil society and the private sector in conflict prevention. In volatile areas of potential conflict, the activities of international non-governmental organizations, both in relief efforts and in efforts aimed at creating and strengthening social, political and economic institutions, are indispensable. And, if it is so — and I think it is — that economic progress and development are fundamental to conflict prevention, we simply cannot expect to succeed without the involvement of the private sector and non-governmental organizations.

The General Assembly, like the Security Council and other constituent parts of the United Nations system, will need time to evaluate this thoughtful report, and time to fully digest the details and the recommendations. It is an excellent basis for going ahead. Our hope is that we will be able to use it to devise better means to prevent conflicts and to build on the progress we are already making. If we succeed, we will need fewer interventions, peacekeeping missions and massive humanitarian relief efforts in the future. And that, I hope, is the goal of all of us.

Mr. Manalo (Philippines): At the outset, I wish to thank the Deputy Secretary-General for her presentation this morning of the report of the Secretary-General (A/55/985).

Today, the General Assembly is discussing the specific issue of conflict prevention for the first time. It is an issue that has been kept more or less backstage in the international peace and security arena. We therefore thank the Secretary-General for his timely report on the prevention of armed conflict, which he describes as consisting of both operational and structural measures.

We share his view that the primary responsibility for preventing armed conflict rests with national Governments, but that in certain situations the active participation or assistance of the United Nations or of the international community, regional actors and non-governmental organizations may be necessary.

A coherent and coordinated approach within the United Nations system to the prevention of armed conflict is important. In that regard, we agree with the recommendations and observations of the Secretary-General on the appropriate contributions that the General Assembly, the Security Council, the Economic and Social Council, the Secretary-General and the International Court of Justice can make.

That will in turn necessitate greater interaction between the General Assembly and the Security Council, and among the General Assembly, the Security Council and the Economic and Social Council. The General Assembly, in our view, should therefore heed the Secretary-General's call that it consider "more active use of its powers", as provided for in the Charter, and in that context consider ways in which it can interact effectively with the Security Council to prevent armed conflict (*A/55/985, p. 11, recommendations 1 and 2*).

My delegation further believes that the General Assembly, being the only universal and the most democratic organ of the United Nations, has a key role in structural prevention which, as the Secretary-General's report states, consists of measures to ensure that crises do not arise in the first place or do not recur. This also requires addressing the root causes of tension or conflict, and inasmuch as the root or underlying causes of conflict are attributed to poverty, the lack of economic progress, human rights abuses, the absence of justice, and competition over economic resources, it is clear that both the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council have important roles to play in initiating and coordinating United Nations conflict prevention activities, especially those of a long-term nature. The Security Council has a key role to play, especially in the implementation of provisions of Chapter VI of the Charter and in operational conflict prevention measures responding to immediate crises.

We also attach great importance to the Secretary-General's preventive role as stated in his recommendation 9. Preventive diplomacy and the use of moral authority remain key conflict prevention activities of the Secretary-General.

A coordinated and coherent approach to conflict prevention is necessary also in view of the limited resources and multiple competing demands within the United Nations. Through effective coordination among the principal organs, we should be in a position to answer basic questions such as where tensions are likely to escalate into armed conflict, when the United Nations should become involved, and what measures are available to the United Nations to address a particular situation.

We should also distinguish conflict prevention measures from those of conflict management, peacekeeping, post-conflict peace-building and nation-building. Although in the real world it is difficult to compartmentalize those activities, that remains necessary, conceptually speaking, in order to ensure effective allocation of resources and the coherence of United Nations conflict prevention operations. Conflict prevention should therefore not be a catch-all term if it is to remain a viable concept. What may be important is to see how United Nations prevention activities in a particular situation can be enhanced by or coordinated with other United Nations activities such as post-conflict peace-building and development assistance programmes.

We have read part two of the report with keen interest and wish to make the following initial observations. First, recommendation 12 calls for more active use of preventive deployment before the onset of conflict. The comparative advantage of preventive deployment as a tool of conflict prevention vis-à-vis other tools has not yet been confirmed empirically. However, encouraging individual Member States to undertake preventive deployment — as compared to the use of that tool by the Security Council or a regional organization sanctioned by the United Nations — may only exacerbate tensions.

Secondly, on disarmament, to which recommendations 14 and 15 refer, preventive action should, of course, focus on small arms and light weapons. But it should also attach equal if not greater importance to nuclear disarmament and to the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, which remain the greatest threat to international peace and security. A focus on biological and chemical weapons is also needed.

Thirdly, recommendation 28, on the involvement of the private sector, should in fact go beyond that sector's adoption of socially responsible practices. The private sector, as we are increasingly being made aware, has in certain instances helped fuel or even prolong conflicts by financially sustaining the antagonists or by contributing to the financial profitability of conflict. The private sector's role in conflict prevention should therefore be enhanced. Other actors, such as non-governmental organizations and civil society actors, should also be involved.

Fourthly, one area to consider in conflict prevention which we believe is relevant to potential conflicts both within and between States is the impact of intensified competition over mineral and other natural resources.

Fifthly, enhancing the analytical capacity of the United Nations is needed to effectively assess situations as they develop so as to determine the appropriate tools for preventing armed conflict.

Finally, we believe that the following principles should guide the conflict prevention activities of the United Nations. First, we should heed the Secretary-General's premise that the primary responsibility for conflict prevention rests with national Governments and other local actors. United Nations-sponsored action therefore needs the active cooperation and consent of the Government or Governments concerned.

Secondly, conflict prevention should be viewed as a process aimed at addressing the conditions that can precipitate armed conflict. Because conditions vary, recognition of the diversity and complexity of the roots of conflicts is crucial.

Thirdly, conflict prevention activities by the United Nations should be sustainable; Member States should be prepared to sustain the price, politically and financially, especially if the goals of particular actions are expanded or intensified, as may be the case in structural prevention operations. However, United Nations conflict prevention as such should not become an open-ended exercise.

Fourthly, conflict prevention actions, whether of an operational or structural nature, should be sensitive not only to existing local conditions, but also to the historical and cultural contexts of a potential conflict. Particular situations are not static events but result from historical processes grounded in political, economic and social disputes. An historical approach could lead to a distorted understanding of the factors promoting conflict and thus limit the possibility of successful prevention.

We hope to continue further consideration of this document. In many ways, we think the Secretary-General's report could lay the foundation for the United Nations role in maintaining international peace and security in the twenty-first century.

Mr. Cappagli (Argentina) (*spoke in Spanish*): May I first express the satisfaction of the Argentine delegation at the holding of this debate on the prevention of armed conflict. We hope and expect it will be the starting point for joint work by the various organs of this Organization. We should like to express our thanks to the Secretary-General for his report contained in document A/55/985, and thank Deputy Secretary-General Louise Fréchette for her eloquent presentation of the report.

Armed conflicts not only kill people, they also destroy a country's infrastructure, waste resources, wreak havoc in the lives of people, particularly women and children, severely affecting health and education. In other words, armed conflicts affect the very future of society. Thus, there is an urgent need to prevent them. It is clear that to prevent conflicts, we must understand the causes that spawn them. Naturally, this is quite complex because each conflict has its own unique features. However, that does lessen the usefulness of moving towards a consistent and coordinated common approach to dealing with all conflicts.

Given this scenario, it is a priority to develop a culture of conflict prevention based on coordination and cooperation among the Members of the Organization, its various organs and the regional organizations and arrangements, in order to enable us to develop and implement appropriate strategies.

We have no doubt that the closer cooperation and coordination of efforts between this Assembly, the Security Council and the Economic and Social Council will prove broadly beneficial in this respect. The Secretary-General, in referring to the various responsibilities incumbent upon the principal organs of the United Nations, is exploring suitable approaches to carry out such coordination. His recommendations point towards working out a homogeneous approach designed to have the culture of prevention take root at

all levels and in all activities of this Organization. We feel this should be welcome.

The culture of prevention encompasses a vast number of components linked to the competencies of the principal organs of the United Nations. Among others, this includes preventive diplomacy, early warning, disarmament, demobilization, preventive missions, confidence-building measures and other measures that are described in detail in the Secretary-General's report. In other words, the essence of the culture of prevention is investing in the future, allowing us to move towards a comprehensive approach to dealing with the underlying causes of conflict and finding the best way of overcoming them.

For a culture of prevention to be successful, it must have two necessary components. The first of these is financial resources to move forward with these measures. With that in mind, we once again welcome the contributions made thus far to the Trust Fund for Preventive Action, and we exhort all to continue contributing to it. The second component is the real political will of those involved in a conflict to resolve it. Outsiders can do very little, no matter how good their intentions are. Nor can we fail to highlight the role played by the international tribunals as an element of deterrence by creating an awareness that impunity will no longer be tolerated. This role will be further refined once the Rome Statute enters into force.

For many years now, the Assembly has striven to prevent conflicts, among other ways, by holding debates and adopting decisions. What has been done to date, however, has not achieved the desired results. Thus, it is appropriate now to find better responses to these problems. The authority the General Assembly has for this purpose derives from the United Nations Charter itself. The United Nations must fully deal with the new trends on the international agenda and formulate a response to international threats to peace and security.

Therefore, on the basis of the idea that it is up to the United Nations to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war, there can be no question that this Organization, through its various organs, has the moral and legal responsibility of preventing conflicts.

Mr. Navarrete (Mexico) (*spoke in Spanish*): My delegation would like to express its appreciation to the Deputy Secretary-General for her brief introduction of the Secretary-General's report, which guides our debate. As I had the opportunity to express in an open meeting of the Security Council to examine the Secretary-General's report on prevention of armed conflict, my delegation believes that the important recommendations it contains deserve careful study on the part of all Member States of the Organization. Mexico therefore gives a special welcome to the holding of the plenary meetings of the General Assembly devoted to the study of this report, and thanks the President for convening them.

The concept of prevention is enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations and is found in its very first Article, which declares one of the Organization's purposes to be "to take effective collective measures for the prevention and removal of threats to the peace". It seems reasonable to suppose that those who wrote the San Francisco Charter held that prevention should be the pillar of the system of collective security. However, that goal has not been translated into action. As the report indicates, the international context in the second half of the century that has just drawn to a close led the Organization to dedicate itself to reacting to conflicts instead of preventing them. Given the international situation in the new century, the shift to a culture of prevention now being proposed by the Secretary-General has a solid basis in the Charter and will help to restore logic to the Organization's priorities.

Mr. Vohidov (Uzbekistan), Vice-President, took the Chair.

The delegation of Mexico deems it fundamental for the General Assembly to make more active use of its Charter powers. The General Assembly must regain the central role assigned to it by the Charter, as was recognized by our heads of State and Government in the Millennium Declaration. In this respect, it should be recalled that the founders of the United Nations, guided by the principles of democracy and equality, granted very broad powers to the General Assembly, the most representative and universal body of the Organization. Under Article 10 of the Charter,

> "The General Assembly may discuss any questions or matters within the scope of the present Charter or relating to the powers and functions of any organs provided for in the present Charter."

It is therefore clear that the General Assembly is called upon to play a preponderant role in all spheres of

United Nations activity and thus especially, as the representative of the European Union pointed out in this debate, in the prevention of armed conflict. We urge the launching of a brainstorming exercise, on the basis of the proposals and recommendations of the Secretary-General, to strengthen the capacities of the General Assembly as a body for mediation and prevention.

It cannot be ignored that, in the maintenance of international peace and security, close cooperation between the General Assembly and the Security Council is indispensable. An initial step towards strengthening coordination between these organs, as the report suggests, would be to increase consultations between their Presidents, not necessarily at fixed intervals, but rather as frequently as circumstances may require. This measure, though apparently modest, could prove useful in allowing the Council to draw on the views of the other Members of the United Nations in whose name it acts.

It is becoming ever more necessary clearly to delimit the scope of the Security Council's competence vis-à-vis the General Assembly. In recent years, in its desire comprehensively and sustainably to settle disputes that have threatened peace, the Council has acted in areas outside its competence. We must strive to ensure that the powers of each organ are respected, while strengthening cooperation between them.

It is obvious that, if a conflict is to be prevented, its root causes must be removed. These causes are, without question, diverse and multifaceted. There can be no doubt, however, that — over and above oppression and the lack of democracy — poverty, underdevelopment and hopelessness within the affected populations are among the most recurrent causes of conflict. Two days ago in Mexico, when the most recent *Human Development Report* was released by the United Nations Development Programme, President Vicente Fox warned that poverty, injurious and shameful to the societies it afflicts, is a source of instability on the international scene. For all these reasons, it is easy to conclude that issues and actions of prevention must be at the core of the work of the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council.

We must enhance the efficacy of the relevant bodies in this field, over and above the Assembly and the Economic and Social Council, with the participation of the Bretton Woods institutions. We need to launch large-scale actions that will allow us to address the root causes of conflicts and thus to prevent their eruption.

That is why the International Conference on Financing for Development is closely linked to the broad effort to build this culture of prevention. At that gathering, we will continue to seek to forge a great global alliance to promote development that will lead to new and more effective forms of cooperation for general and shared progress and to a new way of jointly managing globalization to the benefit of all. Development and democracy are, without question, powerful instruments for conflict prevention.

The arms race is another source of conflict. The very existence of nuclear weapons is a serious threat to peace and security, as pointed out a few moments ago by the representative of the Philippines. Mexico will continue to urge the adoption of measures to further the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons; to push for the universalization and full effectiveness of the various international treaties in this arena; and to promote the negotiation of new bilateral and multilateral accords geared towards the complete elimination of nuclear weapons. We must continue to move towards the agreed goal of general and complete disarmament under effective international control.

The use of small arms and light weapons in recent conflicts has also wrought massive damage and taken a deeply regrettable toll in innocent human lives. At the United Nations Conference on the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects, Mexico will do its utmost to ensure the adoption of an effective programme of action to prevent, combat and eradicate the manufacture of and illicit traffic in small arms and light weapons.

Full respect for human rights, the fight against the scourge of drugs and the campaign against organized transnational crime are further fundamental components of a culture of peace. That is equally true of the struggle against impunity, a priority that is fully shared by the Government of Mexico.

The Secretary-General's efforts to develop and promote a culture of prevention deserve our full support. We must all persevere in the determination to make the United Nations capable of successfully meeting the challenges it faces in the maintenance of

international peace and security, above all through the effective prevention of conflicts.

Mr. Valdivieso (Colombia) (*spoke in Spanish*): At the outset, I wish to express my delegation's gratitude for the holding of a debate of the General Assembly to consider the Secretary-General's report on the prevention of armed conflict, in document A/55/985. This format allows all interested Member States to voice their views on the contents of and recommendations contained in that document.

On 21 June, Colombia, along with other Members, participated in the open debate held by the Security Council to consider that report. On that occasion, our statement referred exclusively to the recommendations put to that organ. Today, we wish to offer some preliminary reactions to the remainder of the recommendations which the Secretary-General has submitted for our consideration.

States bear the primary responsibility for conflict prevention. National Governments and local authorities are called upon to respond properly and in a timely fashion to the political, economic, social and humanitarian circumstances that have the potential to lead to armed conflict or to the intensification of an ongoing conflict. That is the fundamental requirement that should, on the one hand, underlie any activity undertaken in this regard by the international community, including the United Nations system, and, on the other, guarantee that legitimately elected local and national authorities define the direction of and the priorities for conflict prevention.

Over and above the discussion about which actors are responsible for conflict prevention — and there appears to be no disagreement on that issue — is the question of what conflict prevention is and what it is not. The concept is so wide-ranging and comprehensive that by simply playing with words, the members of the international community could apply the term "conflict prevention" to what it used to call humanitarian assistance, assistance for development, public health programmes, education projects for young people and so forth.

We therefore believe that it is up to the General Assembly to make a real effort to define conflict prevention. The facets of this concept are so many, its possibilities so varied and the actors implementing it so numerous that it is imperative to define the reach and scope of conflict prevention. Is it a new model of international cooperation for development? Is it a concept that applies only to societies living through conflict situations or that may possibly be affected by one? How do we bring into conflict prevention the regions or nations whose people live in peace? Were past achievements by States in the area of development a matter of conflict prevention? There are many questions, and we must urgently begin a frank, open-ended and productive international dialogue that can bring States and the international community together in developing a culture of prevention.

There are several areas of work where the General Assembly has taken a course that must be incorporated into our discussion. The strengthening of the machinery for the peaceful settlement of disputes, envisaged in Chapter VI of the Charter, is one such example. Another is the Declaration and Programme of Action on a Culture of Peace, whose implications have been very positive at the regional and national level in several countries, including, of course, Colombia. Also in this context, the Millennium Declaration provides a road map that, if followed, could contribute to conflict prevention. All of these efforts, in which the General Assembly has played a central role, must be brought together, and perhaps the President of the General Assembly, or his successor, will have to lead an intensive effort to get this harmonization process under way.

We strongly support the intensification of the dialogue between the General Assembly and the Security Council. There are political limitations on the Security Council in advancing a true culture of prevention, and the Assembly might provide the natural means of closing that gap. Such a dialogue, the format and modalities of which remain to be explored, might serve as a response to the Secretary-General's recommendation that the General Assembly make more frequent use of the powers conferred on it by Articles 10, 11 and 14 of the Charter, as well as his recommendation relating to the need to give thought to the advantages of a culture of prevention in the long term.

We agree that the Economic and Social Council should devote its high-level segment to the question of the causes of conflict and the role that development plays in promoting a culture of prevention in the long term. The impact would be maximized if we took this opportunity to crystallize in concrete results the dialogue between the Economic and Social Council and

the Bretton Woods institutions, the donor countries, the regional financing banks and, of course, the United Nations funds and programmes. Our goal must be none other than that of unifying and harmonizing activities through which the international community supports national efforts for conflict prevention.

In this context, we must stress the importance of the development of conflict prevention. That is why it is essential for us to strengthen programmes of assistance for development in the United Nations system and, in particular, to ensure that the donor countries abide by their commitments for achieving the stipulated objectives relating to official development assistance.

One of the most important recommendations put forward by the Secretary-General is that relating to the International Court of Justice. That is a United Nations body whose binding jurisdiction Colombia has accepted since 1932. We firmly support the Court as a natural mechanism for the peaceful resolution of disputes among States, and we invite all States to accept its jurisdiction. We have taken note of the designation of the Department of Political Affairs as a focal point for conflict prevention. However, this is an issue that we must examine very carefully, given the possible institutional implications that might result from having the Department for Political Affairs develop the capacity to exercise its own responsibilities in that area, especially when this involves prevention in connection with predominantly political subjects, which usually go hand in hand with very deep-rooted national sensibilities.

In conclusion, I should like to add my country's voice to the urgent call of the Secretary-General for us to intensify our collective efforts in the disarmament arena, particularly by completely halting the illicit traffic in small arms and light weapons and their availability in conflict situations; in renewing our commitment to protecting human rights and ensuring the full effectiveness of international humanitarian law; in responding to the needs of our children and teenagers affected by armed conflict; in including a gender perspective in our efforts; and in responding to the global problem of drugs, while fully adhering to the principle of shared responsibility.

Mr. Mladenović (Yugoslavia): The Government of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia has studied the report of the Secretary-General of the United Nations on the prevention of armed conflict (A/55/985). In our opinion, the report provides a very good basis for consideration of this important issue. For the first time, the mandates and roles of the principal organs of the United Nations and its specialized agencies and programmes in the prevention of armed conflict, as well as previous practice and experience in the field, are described in a systematic way. The Federal Republic of Yugoslavia fully supports the main message of the report: the pledge of the Secretary-General to move the United Nations from a culture of reaction to a culture of prevention.

The prevention of conflict — armed conflict in particular — lies at the core of the concept of collective security, and in that sense it is the cornerstone of the United Nations. Regrettably, that concept has not always been fully respected, primarily because of the lack of confidence that plagued the United Nations during the cold war. The passing of the cold war and, in particular, the advent of the new millennium, seem to have brought about much more favourable conditions for the United Nations to carry out a fundamental change in its work. In order to address new and ever more diverse challenges in the years to come, the world Organization should reform and strengthen the roles of its principal organs as provided for by the Charter, and develop and diversify cooperation with regional organizations, non-governmental organizations, the private sector and others.

We are of the opinion that the concept of prevention, in order to be successful, should be very broadly based. It should not limit itself to the prevention of armed conflict alone; instead, it should also address the causes of negative developments that could lead to tensions, misunderstandings and disputes in the broadest sense of the word.

Of course, the primary responsibility lies with States, as sovereign subjects of international law, because their agreement is crucial for decision-making within international organizations. Furthermore, many disputes emerge first as consequences of internal problems that are subsequently internationalized as they become threats to a region and to the international community.

However, one must not lose sight of the responsibility of the international community, primarily of the United Nations and regional organizations,

particularly in matters that may threaten international peace and security. The Security Council has primary responsibility, provided for by the Charter, for safeguarding peace and security. The role and responsibilities of other principal organs of the United Nations — the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council, the International Court of Justice and the Secretary-General — must not be disregarded either. We consider that the role and activities of these organs should continue to be studied and developed in accordance with the Charter, so as to make them even more effective.

This is very important if we want the United Nations to act consistently and coherently and to fulfil, in conjunction with other international actors, its irreplaceable role, particularly in the field of conflict prevention.

On the other hand, these efforts should not be inconsistent with the provisions of the Charter and of international law, especially if mandatory measures under Chapter VII of the Charter — such as sanctions or the use of force against United Nations Member States — are considered. This is the only safeguard against arbitrary actions that take us away from the international legal order and the Charter.

The Federal Republic of Yugoslavia supports the consideration of the prevention of armed conflict, as it itself has had serious problems because of the crisis in the former Yugoslavia — lengthy sanctions, civil wars in its environment, the situation in Kosovo and Metohija, the 1999 aerial bombardment, and the crisis in the ground safety zone in parts of southern Serbia. Because of the policy of the former regime and wrong moves by the international community in the last decade, proper and timely measures were not taken to prevent the transformation of problems into conflicts and, eventually, into armed conflicts. The new Government of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia has addressed itself, with utmost dedication and responsibility, to resolving all contentious issues, especially those that may pose a threat to the region.

Recently the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia was faced with the problem of infiltration by Albanian terrorists and extremists from Kosovo and Metohija into the ground safety zone in three municipalities in southern Serbia, who carried out armed attacks, including attacks with heavy weaponry, against the Yugoslav security forces and the local population. In order to prevent the broadening of the conflict and to resolve the crisis, the Governments of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and its constituent Republic of Serbia prepared a plan and a programme. They provided for the solution of the crisis by peaceful means, with the participation of the representatives of the Albanian ethnic community and the support of the international community. The aim was to solve the problem in a democratic and transparent way.

Of crucial importance was to re-establish security in that part of the Yugoslav territory and to preserve and develop its multi-ethnic nature, with full respect for the human and civil rights of all citizens, including members of the Albanian ethnic community. In a word, we are determined to build a multi-ethnic society that is based on democracy and economic growth.

So far, the first two phases of the plan and programme have been successfully completed. Terrorist activities have ceased, and terrorists have been disarmed and have withdrawn from the area. This has created conditions for the Yugoslav security forces to take control of this part of southern Serbia and normalize life in the municipalities. The implementation of the third phase is under way, which provides for the integration of the Albanian ethnic community in Yugoslav political and social systems and the creation of conditions for an accelerated economic and social development of the region.

We believe that these actions provide a good example of how a Government, in cooperation with the international community, can act successfully and prevent a basically internal dispute from transforming itself into an armed conflict which may threaten peace and stability in the region.

Mr. Bennouna (Morocco) (*spoke in French*): The report of the Secretary-General on the prevention of armed conflict dated 7 June 2001 (A/55/985) is of crucial importance to the credibility and future of our Organization.

Indeed, in his report, Mr. Kofi Annan reminds us that, at the beginning of this new millennium, the essential objective and primary mission of the United Nations is "to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war".

Every effort should be made, therefore, to prevent and avert all types of threats to peace, whatever their origin and whatever the reasons and motivations

behind them. To this end, we must first of all draw from the arsenal of measures for the pacific settlement of disputes, as enshrined in Chapter VI of the Charter and, more specifically, in Article 33.

From this point of view, the Kingdom of Morocco would like to recall what the jurisprudence of the International Court of Justice has reaffirmed in numerous judgements and advisory opinions, namely the existence in international law of a veritable duty for all the parties to a conflict to negotiate. That obligation to negotiate implies that all of the parties should engage in good faith in the negotiation process and endeavour to overcome their differences in order to achieve a lasting solution, taking into account the different positions.

From this perspective, the role of the Secretary-General is of crucial importance in the area of prevention, by assisting the parties to meet while designating a third party to verify whether they acted in good faith in implementing their obligation to negotiate. The Secretary-General, who personifies the Organization and the international community, is also the person best suited to suggest platforms for agreement based on justice and equity.

Therefore, we deem it advisable to strengthen the functions of the highest official of the United Nations in the matter of good offices, mediation and conciliation, in relation, of course, to the other principal organs of our Organization.

Besides, the work of the Secretariat and the studies that it can carry out provide us with information about the real causes of conflicts, be they injustices, social and economic inequalities, humanitarian questions or violations of the fundamental rights of the human person.

We are convinced that appropriate responses to these issues or to the issues at stake are the best way to prevent situations from deteriorating and disputes from intensifying, which could endanger international peace and security.

The Kingdom of Morocco is convinced that in all attempts to settle disputes, one must avoid any confusion between the political issues under discussion and humanitarian problems, to which urgent solutions must be found in order to alleviate the suffering of the people. Where fundamental human rights are at stake, we cannot hold issues hostage as bargaining chips in political negotiations of any kind.

In all prevention endeavours, psychological factors play a role, especially when systematic defiance and suspicion take root in conflicts that have lasted for years, if not for decades. It is thus of primary importance for the United Nations to put before the parties a number of measures designed to build mutual confidence and to open the way to a new climate of cooperation.

Measures aimed at re-establishing confidence begin — and this is very important — by learning a new language and by the re-establishment of a frank dialogue among the parties. The United Nations alone can enable this genuine change to take place because of its legitimacy and credibility.

It is clear, as the Secretary-General's report stresses so pertinently, that there can be no sustainable development when there exists a devastating climate of conflict or of potential conflict persists, eating away at the social body like a cancer.

The United Nations must assist the parties by deploying the entire range of prevention measures; but at the same time the parties concerned should be encouraged to cooperate in the economic area at the very time they are engaged in negotiations to find a political solution to their disputes.

If it is true that the primary responsibility for prevention lies with the national Governments and with the local actors, at the same time it is the responsibility of our Organization to support and guide their efforts in the right direction. Morocco is convinced that it is only in this way that the United Nations can teach and promote progressively the culture of prevention that the Secretary-General is calling for so strongly.

There should be reconciliation among the people of a nation, because as the philosopher Paul Ricoeur rightly said, a nation cannot be indefinitely in conflict with itself. A people must also reconcile itself with the outside world by overcoming crises arising from situations in which it has been involved.

As the poet Saint-John Perse told us, ripening civilizations do not die from the pangs of autumn; they merely change. It is with these words of hope that I am going to end this brief statement in which I have tried to get to the essence of the question of prevention in

the hopeful knowledge that there is always light at the end of the tunnel.

Mr. Wang Yingfan (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): The Chinese delegation would like to thank you, Sir, for presiding over this meeting to review the report of the Secretary-General on the prevention of armed conflict.

The prevention of armed conflict involves political, economic, social, disarmament and other factors. This makes it both very timely and necessary for it to be reviewed by the General Assembly, the most representative body of the United Nations. At the same time, the Chinese delegation endorses the President's proposal that the report be sent to other relevant bodies of the United Nations system for review, so as to pool wisdom and resources from all sides.

The prevention of armed conflict is not a new concept. In a sense, the United Nations itself has been a product of the prevention of armed conflict. In the past half century — thanks to the unremitting efforts of all Member States — the United Nations has played a great role in preventing the outbreak and escalation of armed conflict in certain regions. Since the end of the Second World War, the international community has effectively prevented the outbreak of new world wars. The contribution of the United Nations in this area should be recognized.

Since the early 1990s, this issue has occupied an increasingly important position on the United Nations agenda. As an important effort in this field, Secretary-General Kofi Annan submitted a report in 1998 on the causes of conflict and the promotion of durable peace and sustainable development in Africa. Thereafter, the General Assembly established a Working Group on the basis of that report.

The present report of the Secretary-General focuses on the important role of the United Nations in the prevention of armed conflict and represents a vigorous effort to strengthen the leading role of the United Nations in the maintenance of international peace and security. Of course, we cannot turn a blind eye to the fact that in today's world partial armed conflict continues to occur in quick succession in different regions or countries. The world is by no means peaceful. Member States and the United Nations still have a long way to go towards the successful prevention of armed conflict.

Towards the end of his report, in paragraph 162, the Secretary-General has asked a very sharp question: "Why is conflict prevention still so seldom practised, and why do we so often fail when there is a clear potential for a preventive strategy to succeed?" This is a question that Member States should really continue to think about in greater depth.

In the Security Council's recent review of the report of the Secretary-General on the prevention of armed conflict, the Chinese delegation, in its analysis of the causes of armed conflict, made clear its views on ethnic conflicts and religious disputes in some countries and regions, and it emphasized the importance of promoting the democratization of State-to-State relations and strictly following the basic norms guiding such relations. Today I wish to make three points.

First, the Secretary-General has indicated in his report that equitable and sustainable development plays an important role in averting armed conflict and that some of the poorest societies are either on the verge of or embroiled in armed conflict. We cannot ignore the fact that most of the current conflicts have occurred in economically underdeveloped countries or regions. The constraints imposed by severe poverty on economic development and social progress in some developing countries, combined with other factors, such as ethnic and territorial dispute, have caused disturbances, and even armed conflict, in these countries. In an increasingly globalized economy the gap between the rich and the poor in the whole world has become ever wider, and many developing countries have been marginalized in the tide of globalization. Therefore, the long-term goal of preventing armed conflict cannot be achieved without a real solution to the question of the economic development of the developing countries. The realization of the grand development objectives laid down in the Millennium Declaration will undoubtedly be a strong guarantee for the success of conflict prevention.

The Chinese delegation supports the call made by the Secretary-General to the international community, and the developed countries in particular, to fulfil their pledge to provide development aid to developing countries and help them out of poverty, so as to make more substantial contributions to the realization of the objectives set forth in the Millennium Declaration. The United Nations should play a larger role in promoting the establishment of an open, transparent and non-

discriminatory international financial and trade system and in ensuring that the developing countries will be able to benefit from the system and participate in the decision-making process on an equal footing with others.

Secondly, the Secretary-General has also talked in his report about the relationship between disarmament and conflict prevention. The United Nations Conference on the Illicit Trade in Small Arms and Light Weapons in All Its Aspects, held this week, is an important event in the field of international arms control. Facts have shown that the illicit trade in and transfer of small arms and light weapons has exacerbated armed conflicts in some regions and complicated the post-conflict reconstruction and peace-building process in some countries.

The Chinese delegation maintains that stronger practical disarmament measures should be taken, and the illicit trade in and transfer of small arms and light weapons should be curbed, so as to prevent regional armed conflict and support post-conflict peace-building. We hope that a programme of action will be adopted by the General Assembly to provide guidance for specific activities in this field.

We all know that small arms and light weapons have a lot to do with conflict prevention. But what about large arms and heavy weapons and weapons of mass destruction? Obviously, these are questions that the international community must take seriously.

Thanks to the long and unremitting efforts of the international community, relevant agreements and conventions have been reached in the field of arms control and disarmament, and they have made important contributions to the maintenance of a global strategic balance and global stability. So as to safeguard this hard-won balance and stability, the international community should now make a concerted effort to prevent the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction and a new round of the arms race caused by unilateralism.

Thirdly, because the world is diverse so must be the causes of armed conflict. Therefore, it is impossible to find a single formula for prevention. Since the financial crises in some countries and regions, the international community has come to understand that different approaches must be taken to financial crises in different countries, because of their differing situations. Similarly, the causes of the failure or unsatisfactory results of conflict prevention operations may also be found in their mistaken approaches. This point of view should be further explored.

The prevention of armed conflict is a comprehensive and important issue. The proposals and views put forward by the Secretary-General in his report need to be considered, discussed, examined and reviewed in depth by Member States, different bodies within the United Nations system and all sides concerned. It is highly necessary that the United Nations draw lessons and accumulate experiences from its practice of conflict prevention, so as to work out effective strategies, ways and measures for the prevention of armed conflict and to continue to deepen the efforts of the United Nations in this field.

Mr. Mahbubani (Singapore): Since we are meeting in this smaller room, rather than in the big Hall of the General Assembly, I hope this means that there will be a greater meeting of minds on this issue.

Conflict prevention is like motherhood. Everybody worships it; nobody opposes it. But unfortunately, conflict prevention does not come naturally and easily like motherhood. This is not a boulder that rolls downhill. Instead, conflict prevention is a huge boulder that we have to move uphill with great effort. And often it slides backwards with disastrous consequences. Witness, for example, the spectacular failure of the Security Council mission that diverted itself from its mission to the Democratic Republic of the Congo to try to prevent the resumption of hostilities between Ethiopia and Eritrea in May 2000. Till today, the Security Council has never tried to analyse why this mission failed. If we really want to know why conflict prevention is difficult, we should, as a case study, analyse the failure of this high-level Security Council mission.

To be fair to that Security Council mission, it may have been a mission impossible. As former Australian Foreign Minister Gareth Evans noted in his essay "Preventive Action and Conflict Resolution",

> "The last minute, however, will rarely be the optimal time to intervene in a dispute: in fact, the point at which a dispute is just about to erupt into conflict is close to being the most difficult at which the international community could seek to intervene. The dynamics of escalation are usually so strong at this point that it is very difficult to stop or reverse the situation."

Clearly, therefore, if conflicts are to be prevented, they have to be prevented at an early stage and probably through a multidimensional process. Fortunately for us, there is no shortage of academic studies in these areas. Several organizations have done intensive studies on the ways and means of preventing conflict. For example, there is the famous Carnegie Commission study, which, as everyone here knows, is mentioned several times in the Secretary-General's report. Indeed, in the annex to the report one can find at least 62 bibliographical references to other studies. For our debate today, the Secretary-General has, as usual, presented a thoughtful and informative report on conflict prevention. There is much in the report that we should study and reflect on. The curious thing about the state of mankind today is that we are never short of the right words to analyse problems. But our deeds have great difficulty matching our words.

Just look at the United Nations own record on conflict prevention in the last 15 years. In 1987 the United Nations established the Office for Research and the Collection of Information to help with conflict prevention. In January 1992 the Security Council met at the summit level to consider, among other things, conflict prevention. But it is chastening to note that two major conflicts — in Rwanda and in the Balkans — occurred almost immediately after these United Nations initiatives. The fuller statistics tell an even larger story. The European Platform for Conflict Prevention and Transformation states in its annual report that more than 3.5 million people have been killed and 24 million internally displaced by intra-State conflicts since 1990. Indeed, 37 major armed conflicts were waged in 32 locations between 1995 and 1997, and of the 25 major armed conflicts fought in 1997, 24 were intra-State, or internal, wars. All those deaths occurred after previous United Nations discussions of preventive diplomacy and in the wake of a wealth of conflict prevention studies. How, then, do we ensure that our discussions in the Assembly today will not prove not equally futile?

Clearly, everyone in this Chamber will agree that the violence of man against man is morally wrong and spiritually abhorrent. But, apart from the moral dimension, the Secretary-General's report has, as usual, injected a dose of common sense and has pointed out the economic costs of conflict. It notes, for example, that the study carried out by the Carnegie Commission on Preventing Deadly Conflict estimated that on the seven major interventions of the 1990s — Bosnia and Herzegovina, Somalia, Rwanda, Haiti, the Persian Gulf, Cambodia and El Salvador — $200 billion was spent. Conflict prevention could have saved the international community $130 billion. Everybody, as we have heard in all the speeches thus far, also acknowledges that the United Nations has a central role to play in conflict prevention. Yet it is curious that each year the United Nations has difficulties raising $1 billion to meet its annual budget when effective action by the United Nations could save the international community $130 billion. Can someone explain the lack of common sense here?

More specifically, the Secretary-General's report also notes that General Romeo Dallaire had pointed out that the deployment of just 5,000 troops to Rwanda in April 1994 would have been sufficient to halt the genocide. The Carnegie Commission study has estimated that preventive action in Rwanda would have cost $1.3 billion but that the subsequent overall assistance to Rwanda in the wake of the genocide had a price tag of $4.5 billion. Unfortunately, that $4.5 billion could not bring back to life the 800,000 Rwandans who died in the genocide.

That remark on Rwanda is made in paragraph 3 of the Secretary-General's report. But what is sobering is that in paragraph 165, towards the end of the report, the Secretary-General notes that

> "Most of the factors that stopped the United Nations intervening to prevent genocide in Rwanda remain present today". (*A/55/985*)

Indeed, it is well known that many small countries, including for example Burundi, face the danger of equally violent conflict. It is clear that if the international community is judged by its deeds and not by its words, those deeds will show that it has not learned the lessons of Rwanda.

One key question we have to ask in this debate is a simple one. Who is responsible for preventing conflict? Article 1, paragraph 1, of the United Nations Charter broadly states that among the purposes of the United Nations is

> "to take effective collective measures for the prevention and removal of threats to the peace".

However, until we assign clear responsibilities, no one will take responsibility when conflicts break out. We therefore suggest that the time has come to do so.

In that regard, it is fortunate that both the Security Council and the General Assembly are debating the Secretary-General's report in close succession. By doing so, both are taking on responsibilities for conflict prevention. There are also, of course, other actors in the United Nations system, as mentioned in the Secretary-General's report, which also bear responsibility for the prevention of conflict. Unfortunately, the division of labour still needs to be clearly spelled out.

All the academic studies suggest that there are both immediate and structural causes for conflict. A simple division of labour would be for the Security Council to act at short notice to deal with imminent conflicts and for the General Assembly and its related organs to deal with structural causes. Each should be held accountable for its responsibilities. But the interesting question is who is accountable to whom?

Paragraph 1 of Article 24 of the Charter states that

> "In order to ensure prompt and effective action by the United Nations, its Members confer on the Security Council primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security, and agree that in carrying out its duties under this responsibility the Security Council acts on their behalf."

We should pay particular attention to two key phrases. First, we, the Members of the United Nations, have conferred — and I stress the word "conferred" — on the Security Council primary responsibility. Secondly, when the Security Council carries out its duties, it is acting on behalf of the members of the General Assembly. The ultimate responsibility for assessing the work of the Security Council therefore lies with the General Assembly.

The question here, therefore, is whether we, the Members of the United Nations represented in the General Assembly, have seriously reflected on the responsibilities that we have entrusted to the Security Council. Perhaps when the Security Council submits its annual report to the General Assembly, as required by paragraph 3 of Article 24, it should include a chapter indicating which conflicts were prevented and which it failed to prevent, and why.

But the Security Council does not have the mandate or the responsibility to address the underlying socio-economic causes of conflict. Clearly, as the Secretary-General pointed out in his seminal millennium report, entitled "We the peoples: the role of the United Nations in the twenty-first century" (A/54/2000), global poverty is one of the underlying causes of conflict. It is well known that war among or between affluent developed societies has become a rarity. But, as five-sixths of the planet's citizens live outside those affluent and developed corners, they are not spared the ravages of conflict.

Ultimately, therefore, if we are serious about preventing conflict, the international community and the principal organs of the United Nations have an obligation to deal with the issues of global poverty. In that regard, let me just say that it was unfortunate that an effort to have a dialogue between the Security Council and the Economic and Social Council in the month of April during the British presidency of the Security Council was aborted. If we want to address the long-term causes of conflict, we need to have such dialogue between the Security Council and other United Nations bodies.

In conclusion, let us stress once again that conflict prevention is not easy. If we are truly serious about moving from a culture of reaction to a culture of prevention, we should not only assign clearer responsibilities, but we should be prepared to accept them as well. The Secretary-General's call for greater coordination between the principal actors within the United Nations system and in the field of conflict prevention should also receive our fullest support. Ultimately, if another Rwanda occurs in the next 10 years we will have no one to blame but ourselves.

Mr. Sun (Republic of Korea): Let me begin by expressing my deep gratitude to the President of the General Assembly for convening these meetings on the prevention of armed conflict. I would also like to thank the Secretary-General for his enlightening and comprehensive report (*A/55/985*).

This is an opportune time for the General Assembly to address this important issue, as recent conflicts have underscored the need to develop a more effective preventive strategy. While a sense of national ownership is essential for the success of preventive measures, the United Nations has a unique and critical role to play in conflict prevention, as confirmed last year in the Millennium Declaration.

Effective conflict prevention is certainly a challenging and complex endeavour encompassing social, economic and political dimensions. In our view, the most effective preventive strategy is a comprehensive one that entails short-term and long-term measures to foster political dialogue, the rule of law, respect for human rights, socio-economic development and good governance.

My delegation shares the Secretary-General's commitment to moving from a culture of reaction to a culture of prevention. But while it is generally acknowledged that conflict prevention is far more cost-effective than post-conflict management in both human and financial terms, States are often wary of making present-day sacrifices for preventive efforts whose impact will not be apparent until well into the future.

I would like to take this opportunity to comment on some issues of particular importance to my delegation, many of which were raised in last month's Security Council open debate.

First, my delegation fully agrees with the Secretary-General's recommendations for strengthening the preventive capacities of, and improving coordination among, the principal United Nations organs. In particular, we support his suggestion that the General Assembly consider a more active use of its powers by developing recommendations for conflict prevention and drawing the Security Council's attention to situations that may pose a threat to international peace and security. We also believe that greater interaction between the General Assembly and the Security Council in the development of long-term conflict prevention and peace-building strategies would be of great value.

Secondly, recognizing that sustainable peace cannot be achieved without addressing the structural root causes of conflicts, my delegation supports a broader, more holistic approach to conflict prevention. Indeed, the most effective form of conflict prevention may well be the pursuit of sustainable development. As the Secretary-General noted, conflict prevention and sustainable development are mutually reinforcing activities; an investment in conflict prevention is essentially an investment in development, and vice versa. In this regard, enhanced cooperation within the United Nations system, particularly among the General Assembly, Security Council and Economic and Social Council, is critical.

Thirdly, recognizing that a stable social environment is key to preventing the outbreak or recurrence of conflicts, my delegation is in favour of devoting greater resources to United Nations humanitarian agencies and integrating preventive activities into their work in pre-crisis situations. In particular, we stress the need to safeguard the rights of women and children and mobilize international support for the fight against HIV/AIDS. My delegation is pleased that last month's special session of the General Assembly on HIV/AIDS was a success, and looks forward to this September's special session on children. It is our hope that these events will give fresh impetus to United Nations humanitarian efforts.

Fourthly, given the multifaceted nature of today's conflicts, my delegation believes that a wide array of international actors, including non-governmental organizations, civil society and regional organizations, have a valuable role to play in conflict prevention. In particular, we encourage the United Nations to strengthen its relationship with regional and subregional organizations and pursue regional preventive strategies, as appropriate. Due to their proximity, regional and subregional organizations are often more attuned to the situation on the ground and can therefore develop effective institutional capacities for conflict prevention.

Fifthly, emphasis should be placed on an effective early warning mechanism, a more proactive use of preventive monitoring and preventive peacekeeping missions. The United Nations Preventive Deployment Force in Macedonia and the United Nations Mission in the Central African Republic, both cited in the Secretary-General's report, are good examples of preventive deployment.

Lastly, we firmly support enhancing the traditional preventive role of the Secretary-General, as detailed in the Secretary-General's report. While we believe that the allocation of greater resources for these activities is necessary, my delegation also emphasizes the need to consider carefully their financial implications. In particular, we welcome the Secretary-General's intention to present periodic regional and subregional reports to the Security Council on potential threats to international peace and security.

We should bear in mind that the United Nations will not be able to fulfil its mandate for the maintenance of international peace and security

without strong political will on the part of the parties concerned. The principle and spirit of peaceful settlement of disputes enshrined in the United Nations Charter should be fully respected by all Member States. Parties directly involved in conflicts must take the initiative to first pursue dialogue and reconciliation, with the encouragement of the international community.

I wish to conclude by reiterating the intention of the Republic of Korea, a contributor to the Trust Fund for Preventive Action since 1997, to strongly support and firmly commit itself to the efforts of the United Nations and the international community to prevent armed conflicts.

The meeting rose at 1.10 p.m.